

Enrollment Management and Brand Equity Committee

March 2025



Radford
UNIVERSITY



Enrollment Management and Brand Equity Committee

12:45 p.m. **

March 20, 2025

**Mary Ann Jennings Hovis Memorial Board Room
Martin Hall, Third Floor, Radford, VA**

DRAFT
Agenda

- **Call to Order** Mrs. Jennifer Wishon Gilbert, *Chair*
- **Approval of Agenda** Mrs. Jennifer Wishon Gilbert, *Chair*
- **Approval of Minutes** Mrs. Jennifer Wishon Gilbert, *Chair*
 - December 5, 2024
- **Brand Identity Report** Dr. David E. Perryman
*Associate Vice President,
Strategic Communications*
 - Perception Study Results
 - Communication Plan Update
- **Enrollment Management Report** Dr. Dannette Gomez Beane,
*Vice President for Enrollment
Management and Strategic
Communications*
 - Spring Census
 - Preliminary Fall Projections
 - Strategic Enrollment Planning Process Timeline
- **Other Business** Mrs. Jennifer Wishon Gilbert, *Chair*
- **Adjournment** Mrs. Jennifer Wishon Gilbert, *Chair*

**** All starting times for committee meetings are approximate. Meetings may begin either before or after the listed approximate start time as committee members are ready to proceed.**

Committee Members

Mrs. Jennifer Wishon Gilbert, Chair
Ms. Betsy D. Beamer, Vice Chair
Ms. Callie Dalton
Mr. David Smith
Mr. Jonathan D. Sweet

Meeting Materials



Radford
UNIVERSITY

Enrollment Management and Strategic Communications





Strategic Communications

Revise Brand – Baseline and Reporting

Tactic	Metrics	Baseline	Target	Reporting Unit	Responsible
1. Revise Radford University's brand to increase brand equity	Brand recognition surveys	Current brand recognition among potential students, K-12 employees and regional businesses	Statistically significant increases of perception study indicators of brand awareness	Quarterly	Enrollment Management & Strategic Comms

Brand Perception Survey: Part 2

- Hosted the second brand perception survey from Jan. 27 – Feb. 10, 2025
- 15-minute survey mirrored methodology, content and audiences of 2023 survey

Brand Perception Study: Part 2 – Audiences, Measures, Questions

Stakeholder Audiences

- Current students
- Current employees (T&R faculty, AP faculty, classified employees)
- Alumni
- Prospective students
- Representative sample of general population (VA, WV, MD, TN, KY, NC, DC)

Measures

- Awareness
- Consideration
- Attribute association
- Strengths/weaknesses
- Personality/cultural traits

Examples of Questions

- Thinking about the colleges/universities in your area, which first come to mind?
- How would you describe Radford University to a friend who'd never heard of it?
- What do you think Radford University is best at or most well-known for?
- How well does Radford University deliver each of these ideas [brand pillars] to the students it serves?
- What, if anything, do you think might prevent a prospective student from considering Radford University?
- On a scale of 0-10 with 10 being the best possible score and 0 being the worst, how likely would you be to recommend Radford University to a future student?

Brand Perception Study Part 2 – About the Respondents

Total Number of Respondents: 2,657

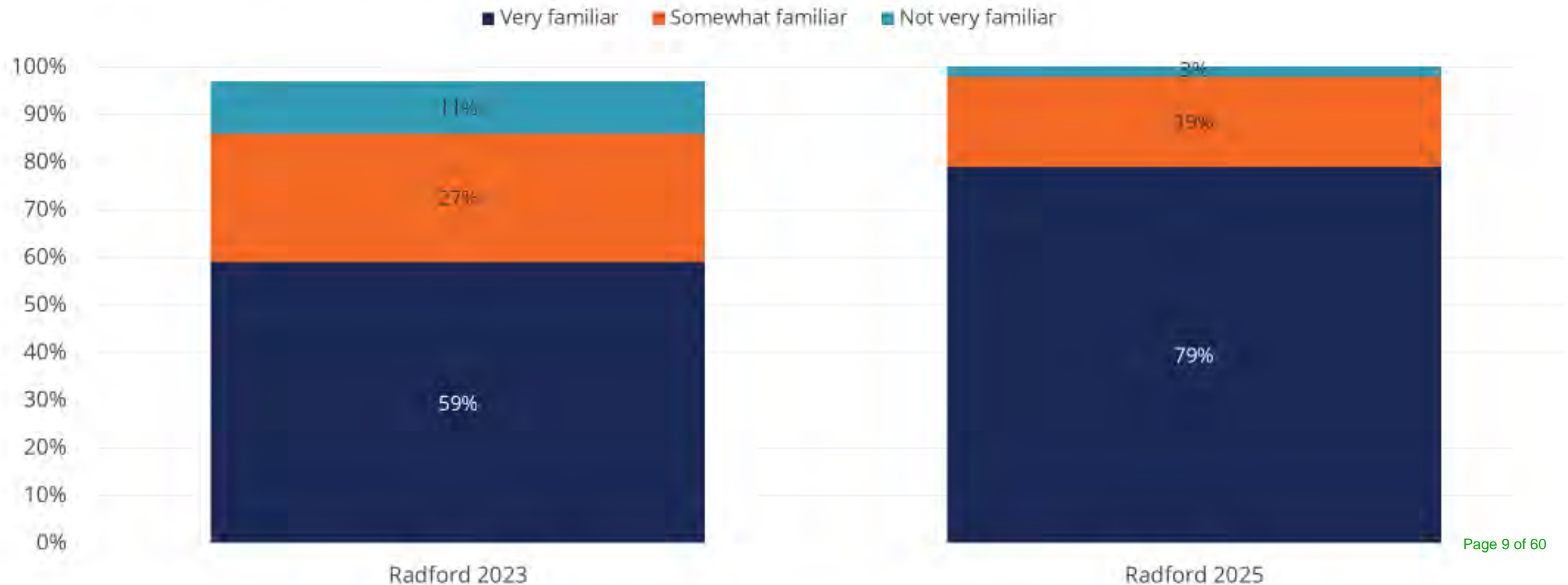
- Students: 884
- Employees: 424
 - T&R faculty and A/P faculty: 274
 - Classified staff: 150
- Alumni: 570
- Prospective students: 256
- Representative sample of general population: 523

Comparable # of responses to 2023 survey



Radford Awareness Prospects 2023 vs. 2025

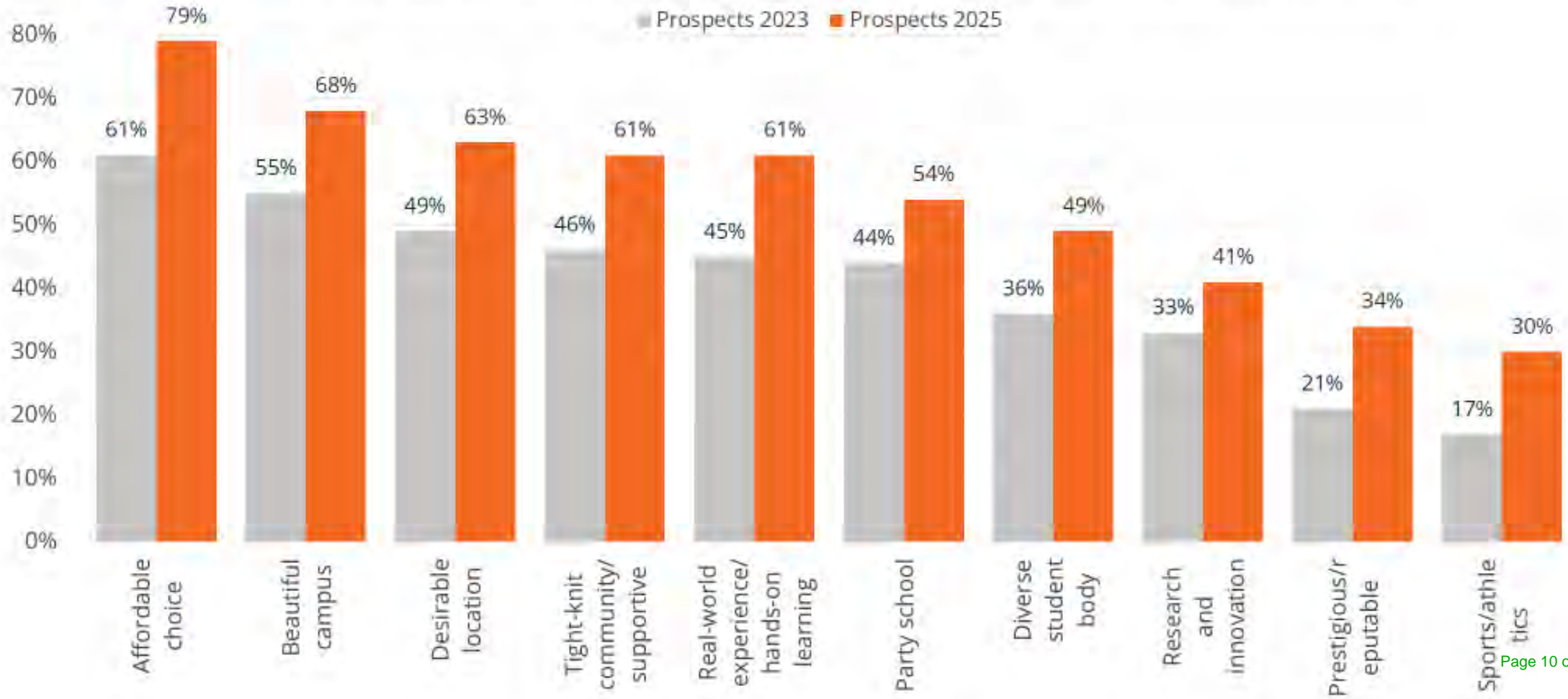
In even better news, the 2025 prospects appear more primed and educated on Radford than the 2023 pool of prospects. Top-box scores are 20-points higher than they were in 2023. And top-two box scores are 10-points higher.





Radford Attributes among Prospects

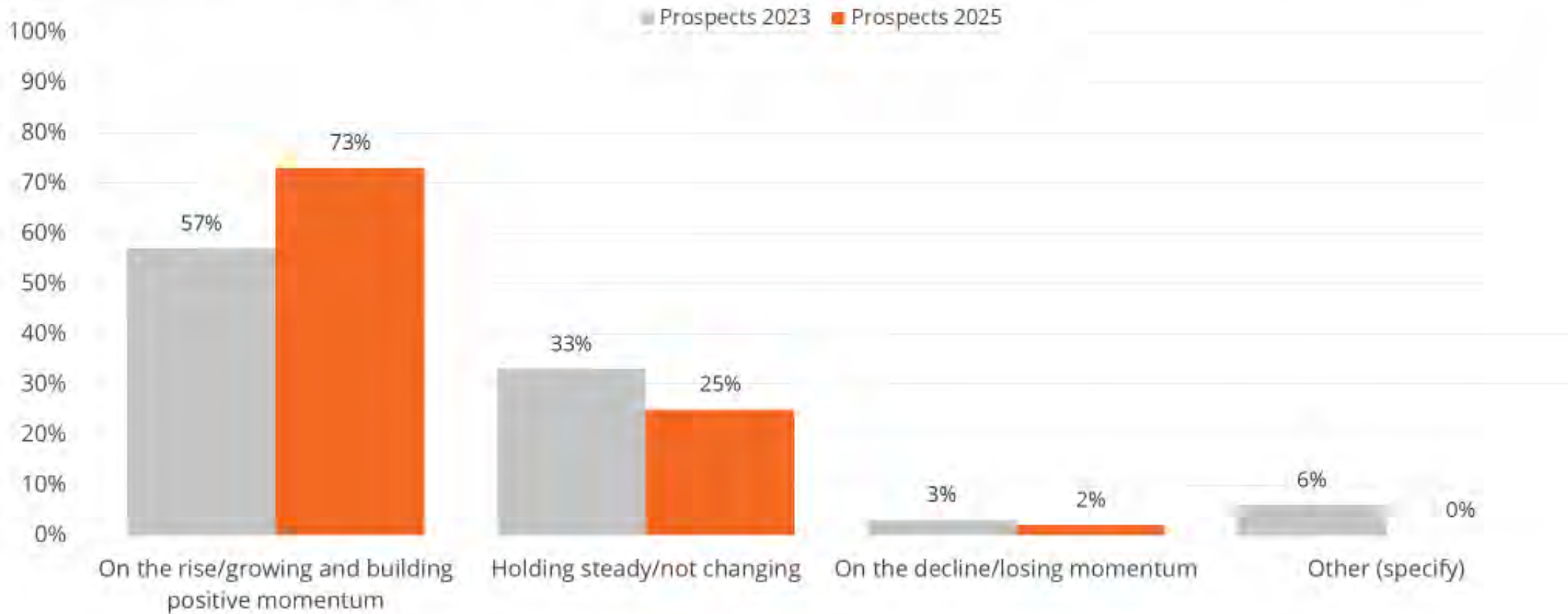
From 2023-2025 many attributes increased among prospects including being affordable, having a beautiful campus, in a desirable location, with a tight-knit community, and providing real world experience. Essentially with this better informed and more aware prospect pool, all attributes registered stronger.





Growth Trajectory among Prospects

Prospects see an even greater elevation of Radford's trajectory/growth path since 2023 with a 16-point increase in being seen as on the rise.



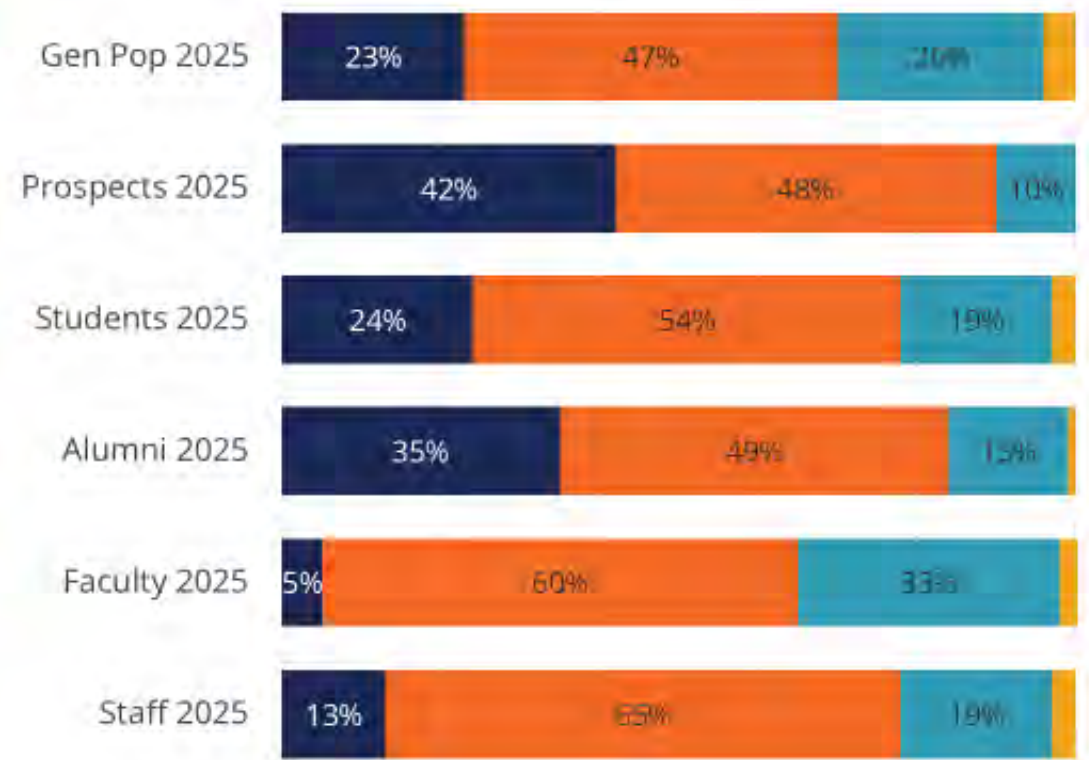
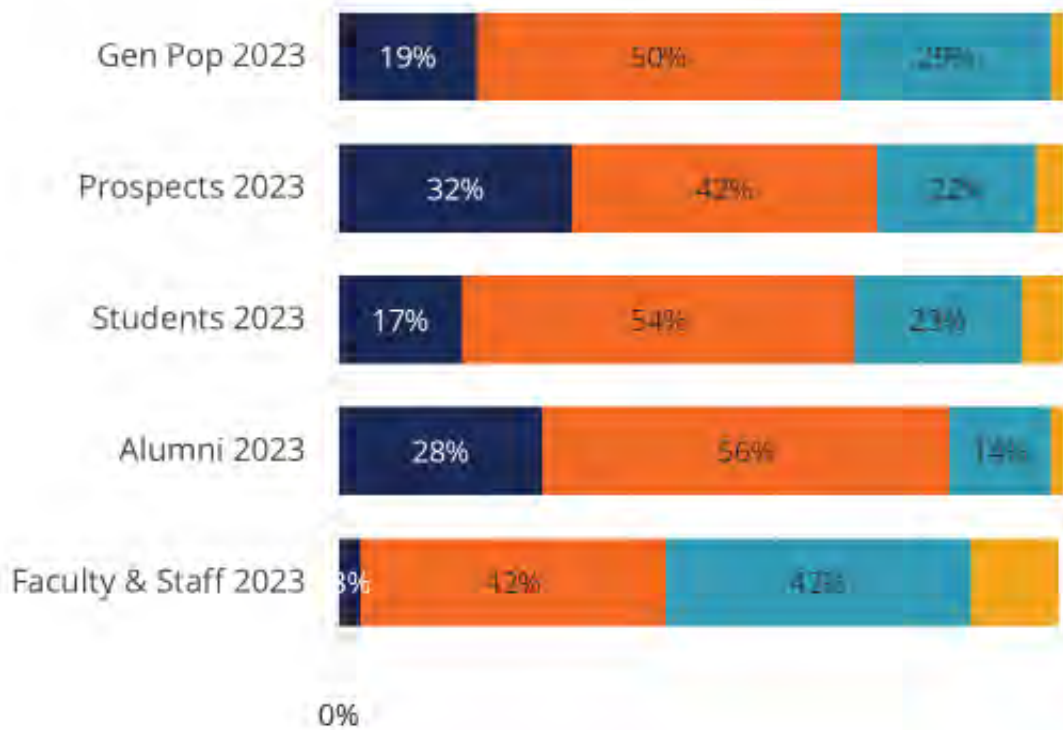


Radford Reputation 2023 vs. 2025

The charts below offer a 2023-2025 comparison summary of all survey audiences. Note that faculty and staff were fielded as one segment in 2023. Perceptions regarding Radford's brand reputation has increased over the past 2 years among all audiences tested.

■ Excellent (superior) ■ Good (average) ■ Fair (just ok) ■ Poor (inferior)

■ Excellent (superior) ■ Good (average) ■ Fair (just ok) ■ Poor (inferior)

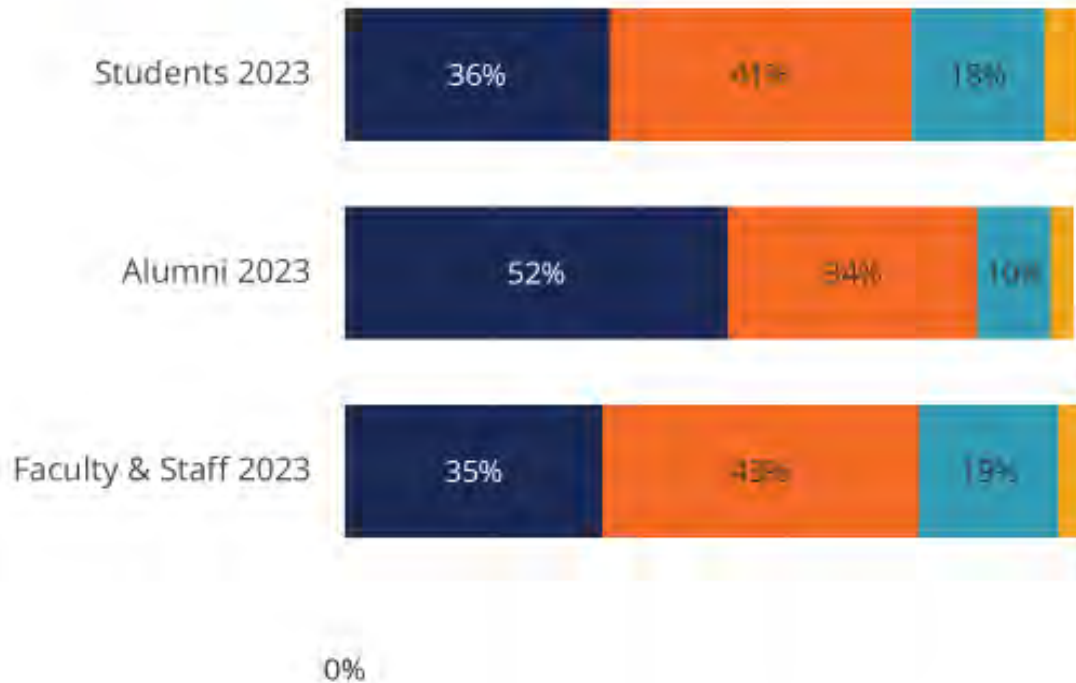




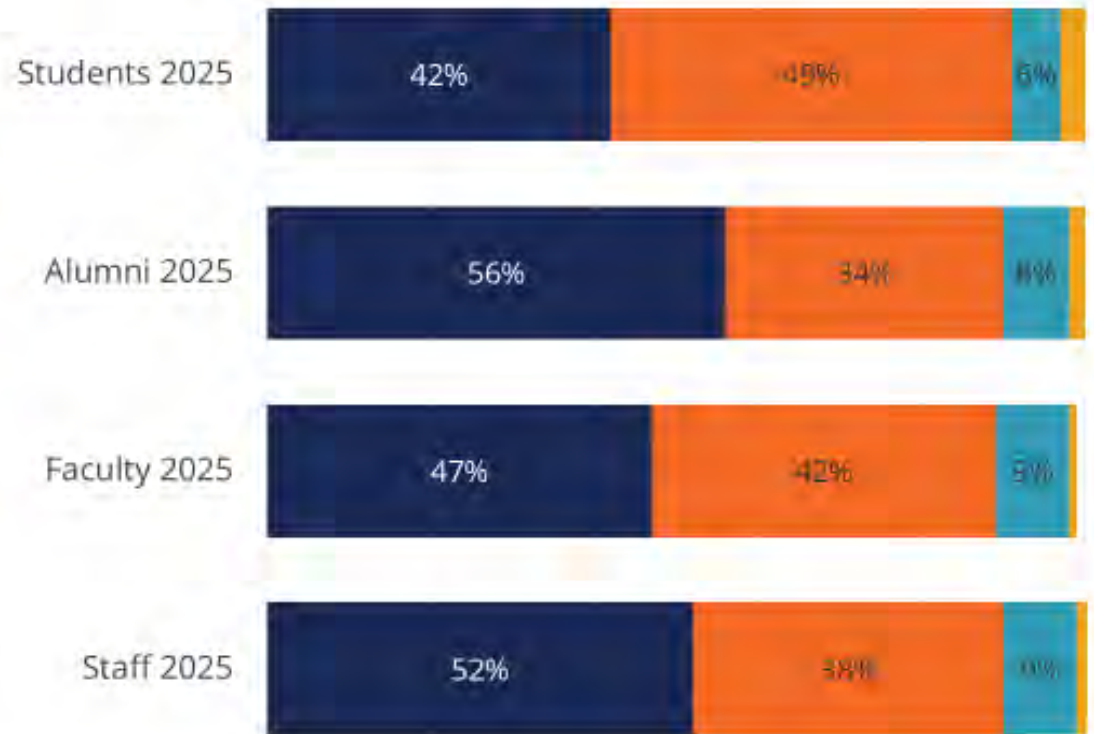
Level of Pride 2023 vs. 2025

Pride levels have significantly increased across all insider audiences. The alumni continue to have the greatest levels of pride.

■ Very proud ■ Somewhat proud ■ Not very proud ■ Not proud at all



■ Very proud ■ Somewhat proud ■ Not very proud ■ Not proud at all



Net Promoter Scores (NPS) 2023 vs. 2025

And Net Promoter Scores for all insider audiences have improved. The strengthening of faculty and staff pride and brand advocacy is a commendable achievement from 2023 to today.

2023 NPS

■ Promoter ■ Passive ■ Detractor



2025 NPS

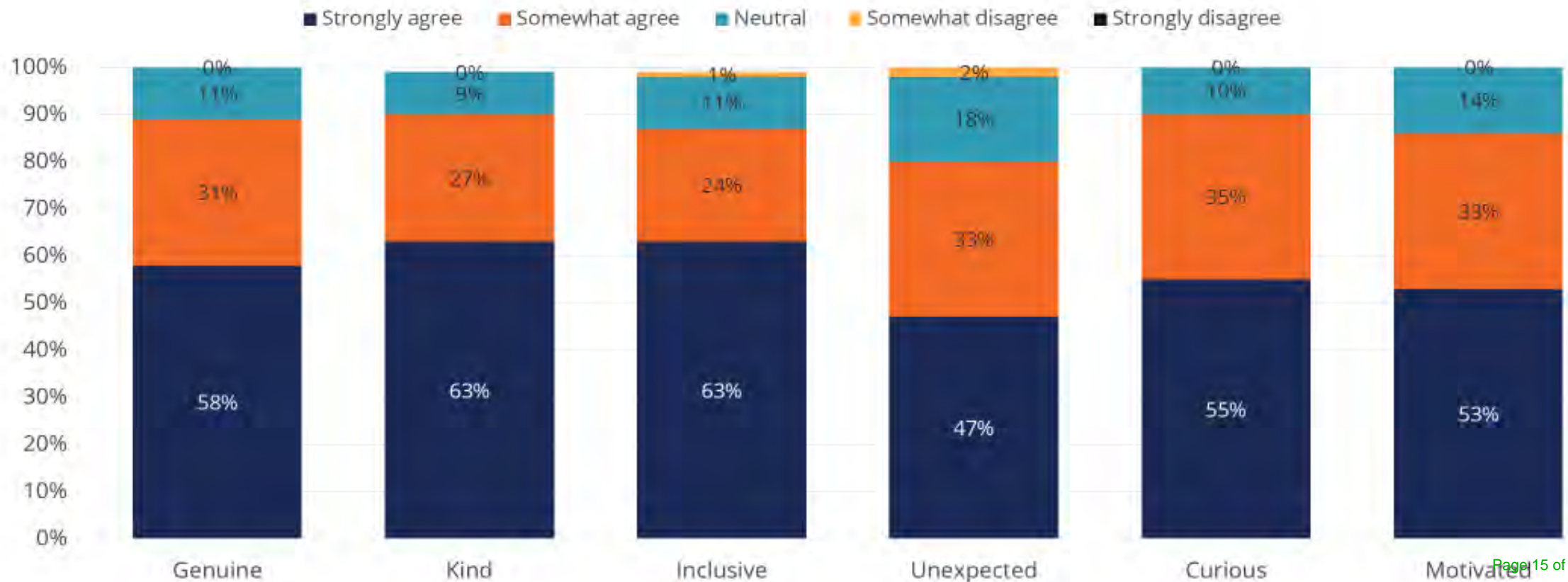
■ Promoter ■ Passive ■ Detractor





Radford's Personality among Prospects

Among prospects, Radford best reflects the kind and inclusive personality.

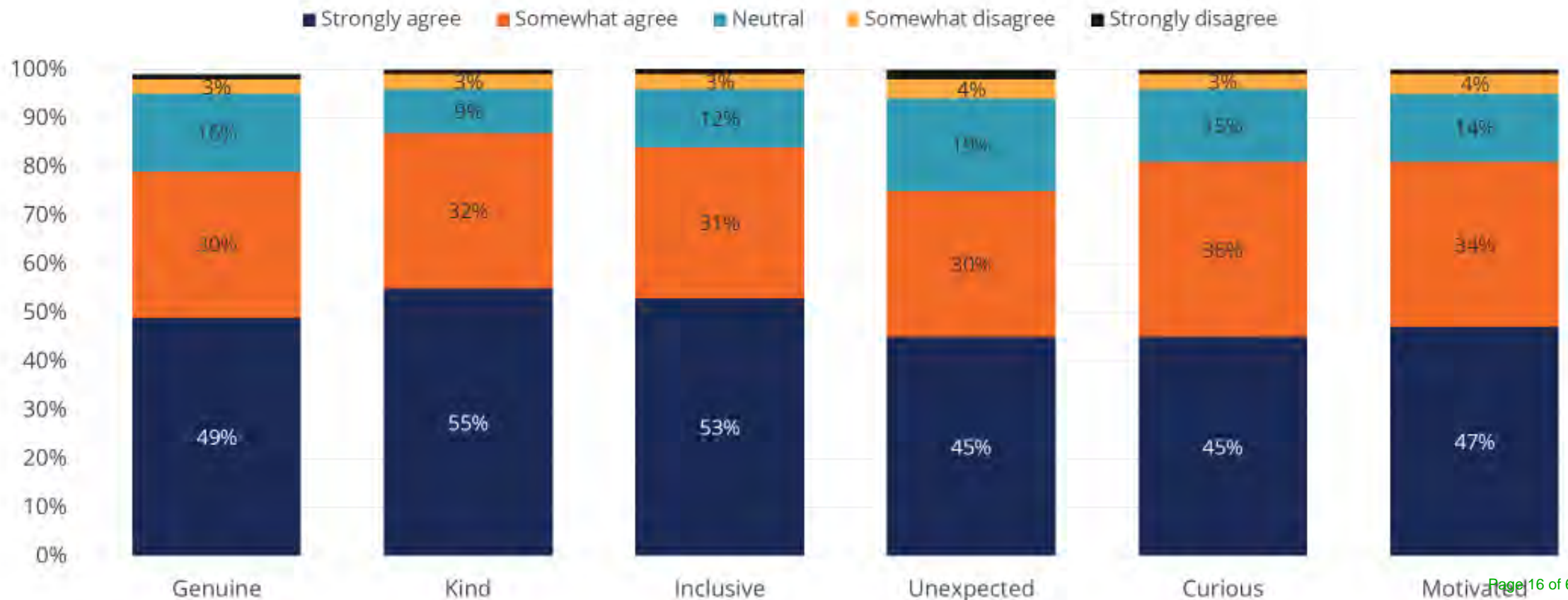


Q. How much do you AGREE or DISAGREE that the Radford University brand reflects each of the following personality traits? (Select one for each)



Radford's Personality among Students

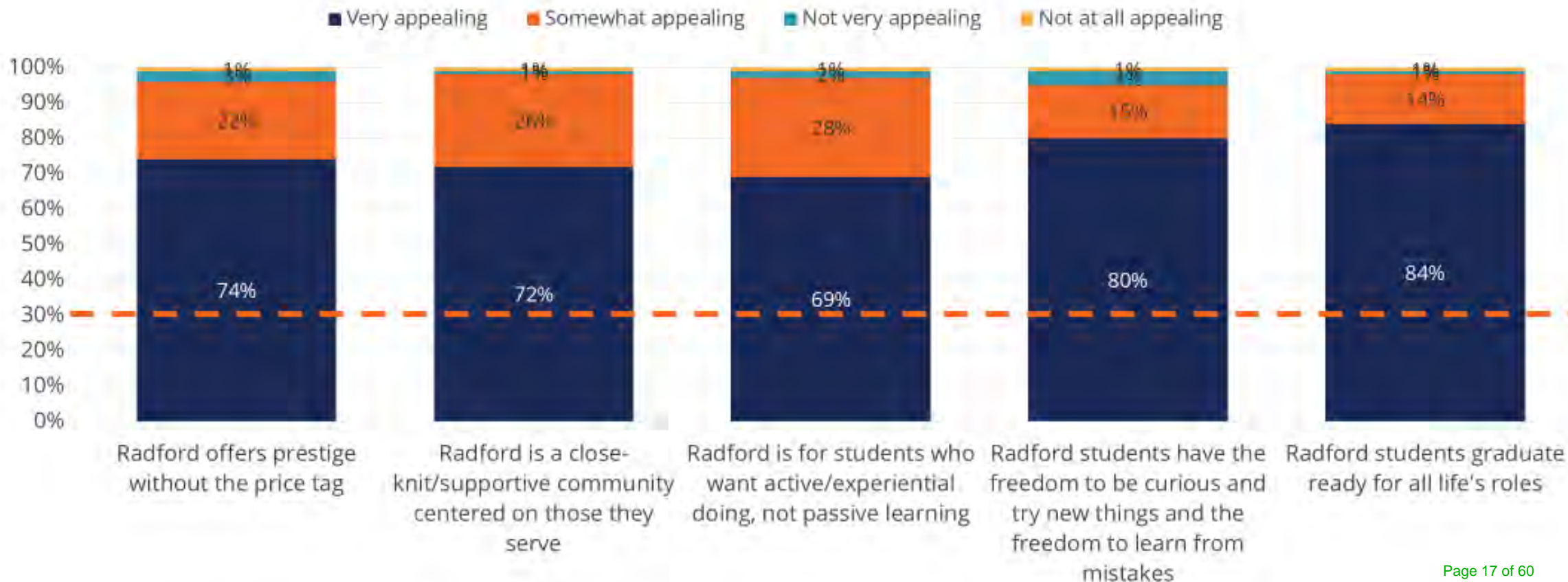
Like the prospects, current students see the brand as being most reflective of kindness and inclusiveness.





Messaging Appeal among Prospects

All messaging ideas are even more appealing to prospective students, which is even more encouraging given they represent the most viable candidates for conversion and enrollment.

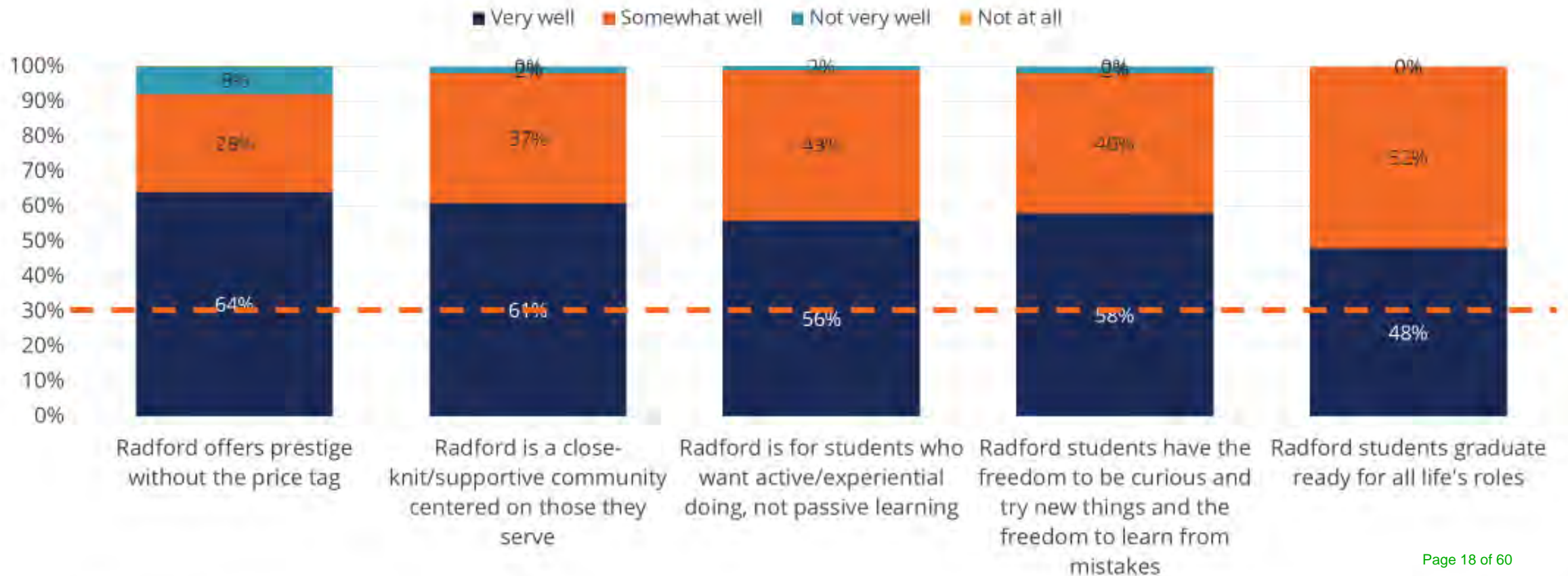


Q. How appealing to you are each of the following single ideas that could be used to describe Radford University. (Select one for each)



Messaging Performance among Prospects

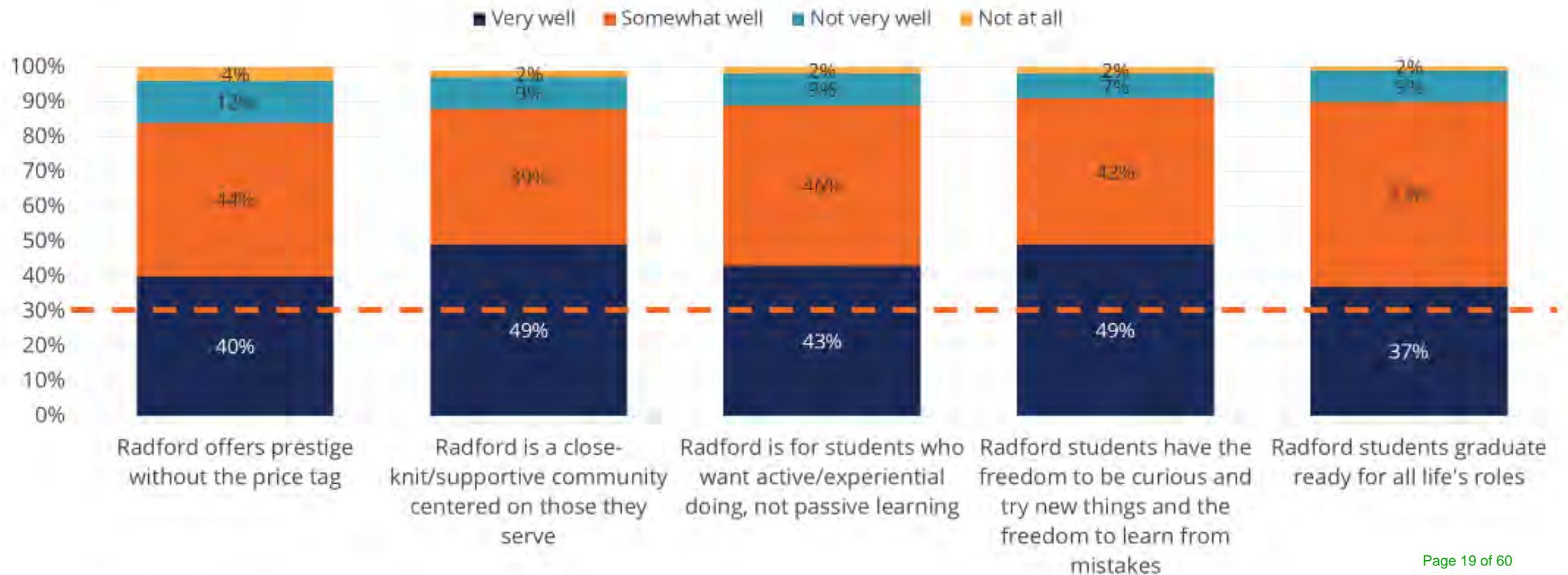
And again, these messages appear to be credible claims making them easy messages to promote and uphold for the University.





Messaging Performance among Students

But are the messages also perceived as credible among the insiders who know Radford the best? It does indeed appear that they do. The close-knit and the freedom to be curious ideas feel the most authentic to students.



• Opportunities Moving Forward

- **Competitive positioning:** While awareness is strong, Radford should continue to focus on differentiating itself from other Virginia schools. Messaging that emphasizes Radford's unique strengths—community, one-on-one attention, and real-world experience/hands-on learning—should be amplified.
- **Conversion:** Despite gains in awareness and reputation, Radford must work to convert this into increased consideration. Continuing to improve perceptions of Radford as a preferred or aspirational choice will be key.
- **Targeting barrier perceptions:** Efforts should continue to address perceptions of Radford as a "fallback option" or a "party school" and overcome its rural location stigma. Highlighting the benefits of Radford's close-knit, student-centered environment could help mitigate these barriers.
- **Further messaging refinement:** While the messaging resonated well, maintaining authenticity and ensuring that claims align with the university's actual offerings will be critical in sustaining brand credibility. The current direction appears on track.

Revise Brand – Baseline and Reporting

Tactic	Metrics	Baseline	Target	Reporting	Unit Responsible
2. Release updated website	Website analytics	Current website use analytics and accessibility limitations	Increase general traffic to site from campaign sources (EAB, AP, VisionPoint, SEO, etc.) by 10%	Annually at late spring BOV meeting	Enrollment Management and Strategic Comms

Comparing Website Traffic and Engagement in 2023 vs. 2024

- Decreases in # of visits to website (-12%), # of webpages viewed (-12%) and # of unique visitors (-4%).
- Increases in webpage views per active user (+30%, from 3.86 pages to 5.52 pages), average engagement time per active user (+40%, from 1 minute 25 seconds to 2 minutes 21 seconds) and desired actions taken on webpages (+2%, users watch a video, submit a "Request Information" form, or click on "Apply" or "Visit Radford" buttons).

Website Performance Dashboard – March 6, 2025

[SHARE REPORT](#)

Site Score ?



Site Name: `www`

Last Completed: 3/6/2025 at 1:39 AM

Total Pages: 5,073

Robots.txt: ✓ [View File](#)

Sitemap.xml: ✓ [View File](#)

SEO ?



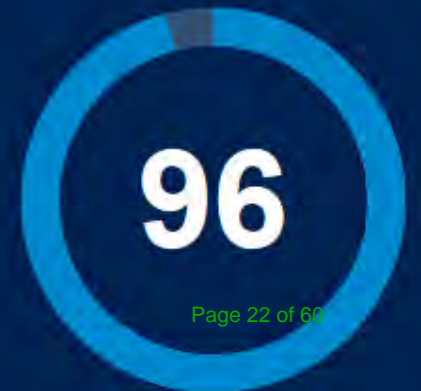
Accessibility ?



Links ?



Spelling ?



Radford University Communication Plan 2024-2026



Since December 2024 BOV Meeting

- Met with Wishon Gilbert, Castele and Gomez Beane in Jan. 2025.
 - Revisited notes from July 2024 BOV retreat.
 - Discussed input from Dec. 2024 BOV meeting.
- Revised University Communication Plan based on Jan. 2025 discussion.
- Met with Wishon Gilbert, Castele and Gomez. Beane in Feb. 2025 to review revised draft.

Radford University Communication Plan 2024-2026

Key Modifications Since December 2024 BOV Meeting

1. Ensure that plan is aligned with larger university strategic framework: vision, mission and strategic priorities.
2. Enhance focus on primary and secondary audience segments to ensure understanding of their nuances.
3. Establish core message board with proof points to guide storytelling and incorporate into leadership communications.
4. Develop template and process to help colleges and divisions create customized communication plans aligned with university plan.



College/Division Vision Statement	
College/Division Mission Statement	

Goal 1: Increase awareness and engagement in college/division events and activities

Audience(s)	Tactic/Platform(s)	Message(s)	KPIs	Date/Frequency
1				
2				
3				

Goal 2: Bolster college/division's reputation as a thought leader in touch with and influencing important issues

Audience(s)	Tactic/Platform(s)	Message(s)	KPIs	Date/Frequency
1				
2				
3				

Goal 3: Increase college/division's brand equity by promoting the new brand elements, pillar messages and tagline

Audience(s)	Tactic/Platform(s)	Message(s)	KPIs	Date/Frequency
1				
2				
3				

Goal 4: Enhance college/division's leadership communications through formal and informal channels

Audience(s)	Tactic/Platform(s)	Message(s)	KPIs	Date/Frequency
1				
2				
3				

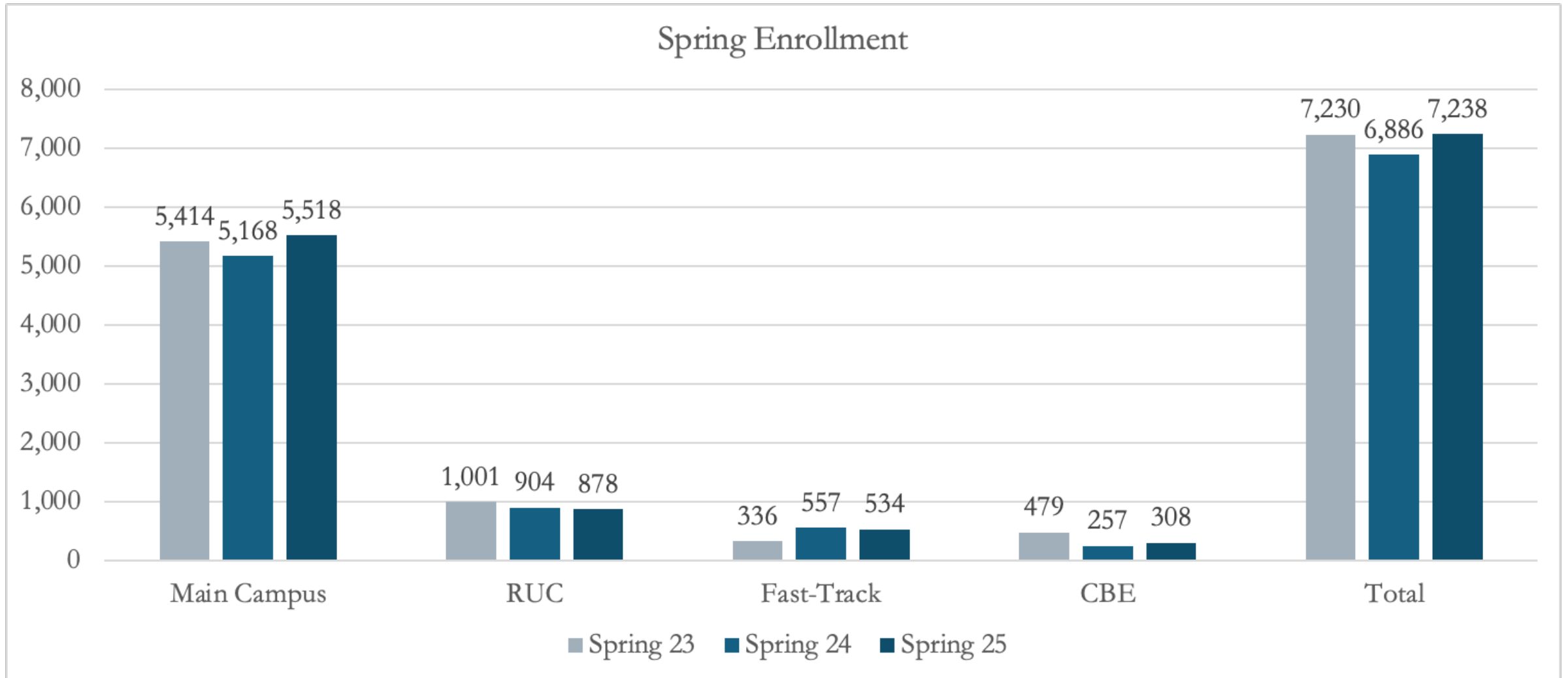
Goal 5: Enhance college/division's web presence through compelling storytelling and refreshed content

Audience(s)	Tactic/Platform(s)	Message(s)	KPIs	Date/Frequency
1				
2				
3				

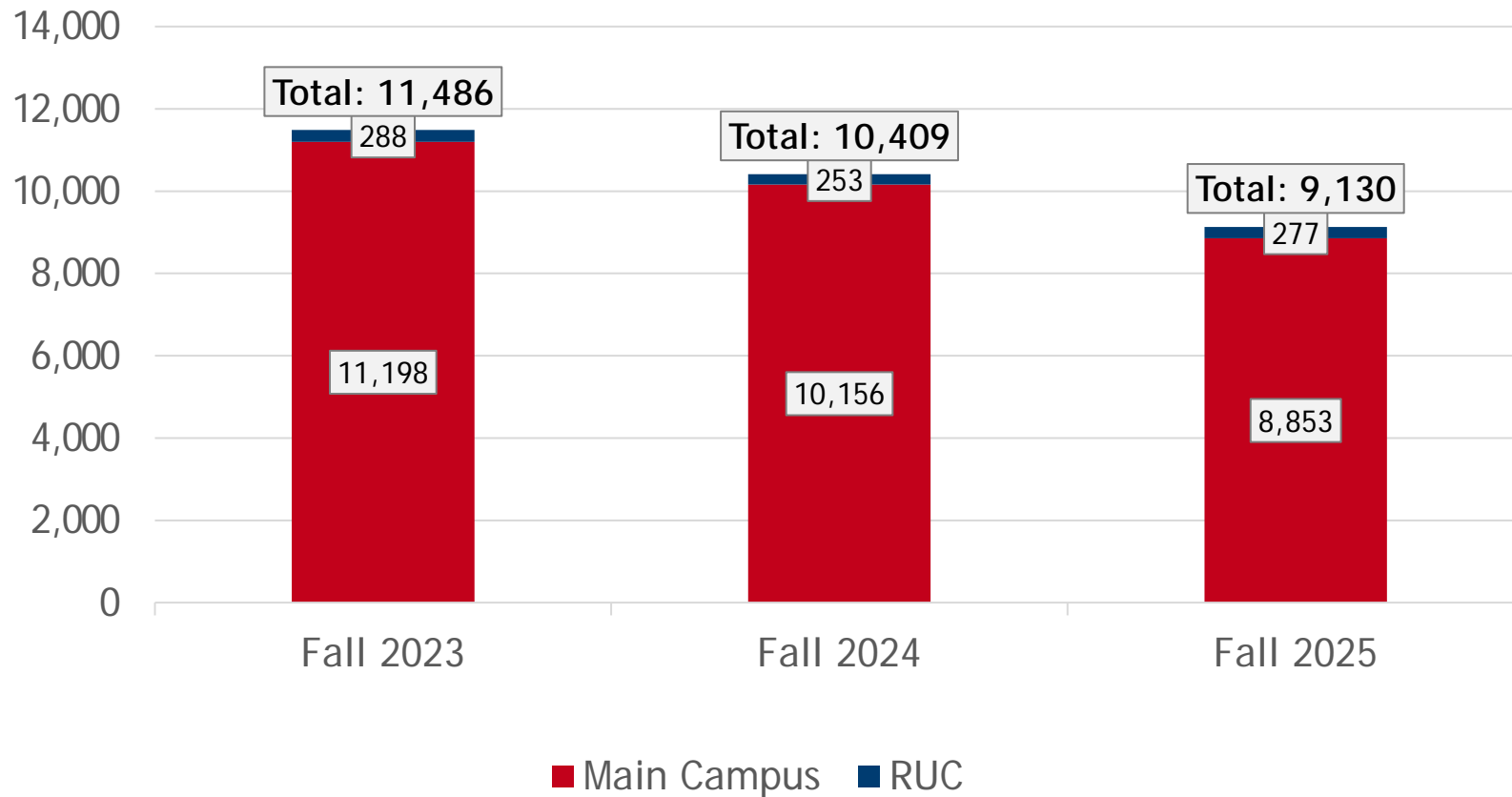


Enrollment Management

Highlight – UG Retained or graduated students at a 94% rate!

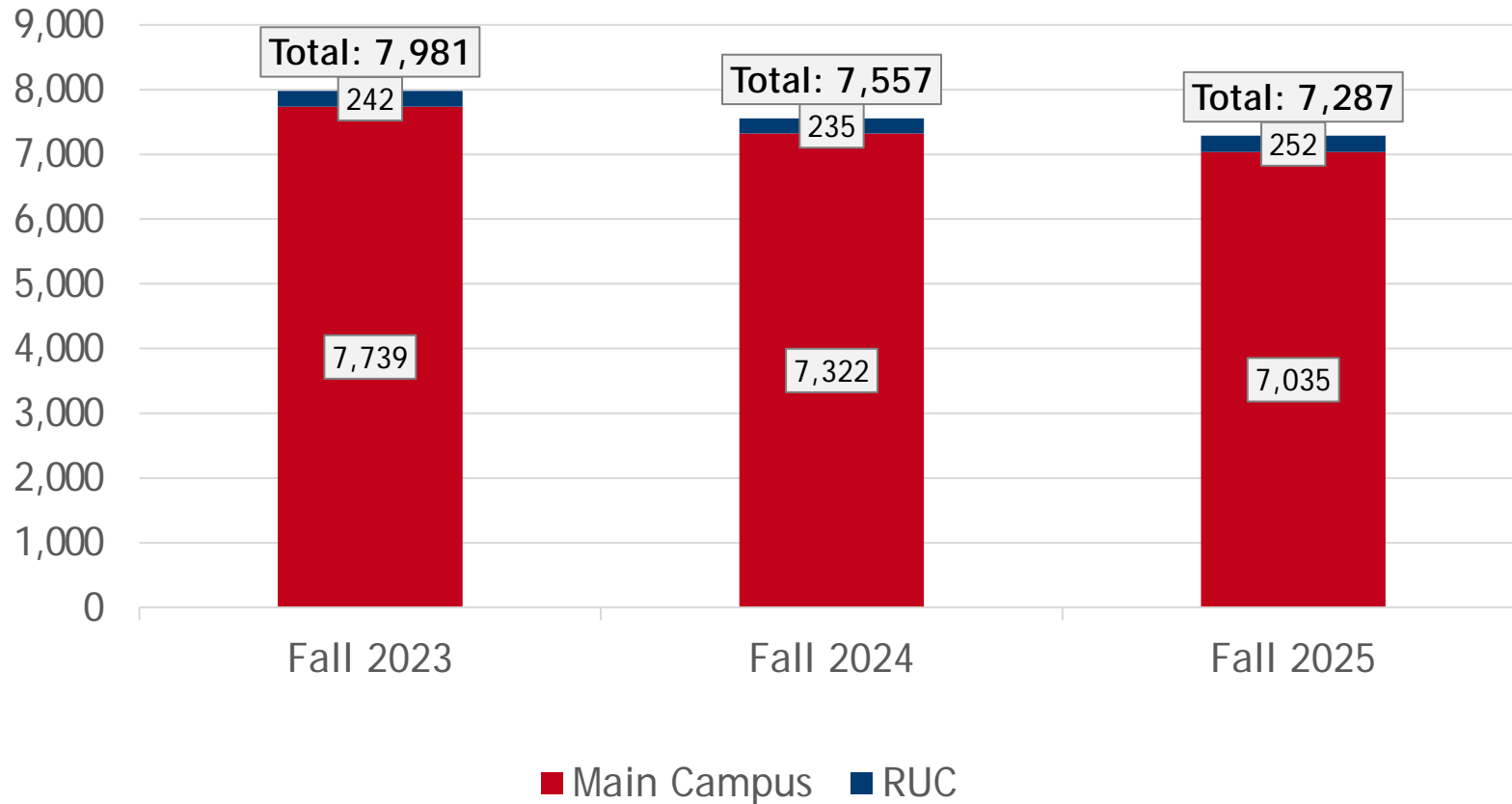


New Freshmen Total Applications



- Application data as of March 4th
- Reminder that we no longer use agency for top of funnel cultivation
- 1,009 of the loss of applications are international and Out of State

New Freshmen Applications – In-State

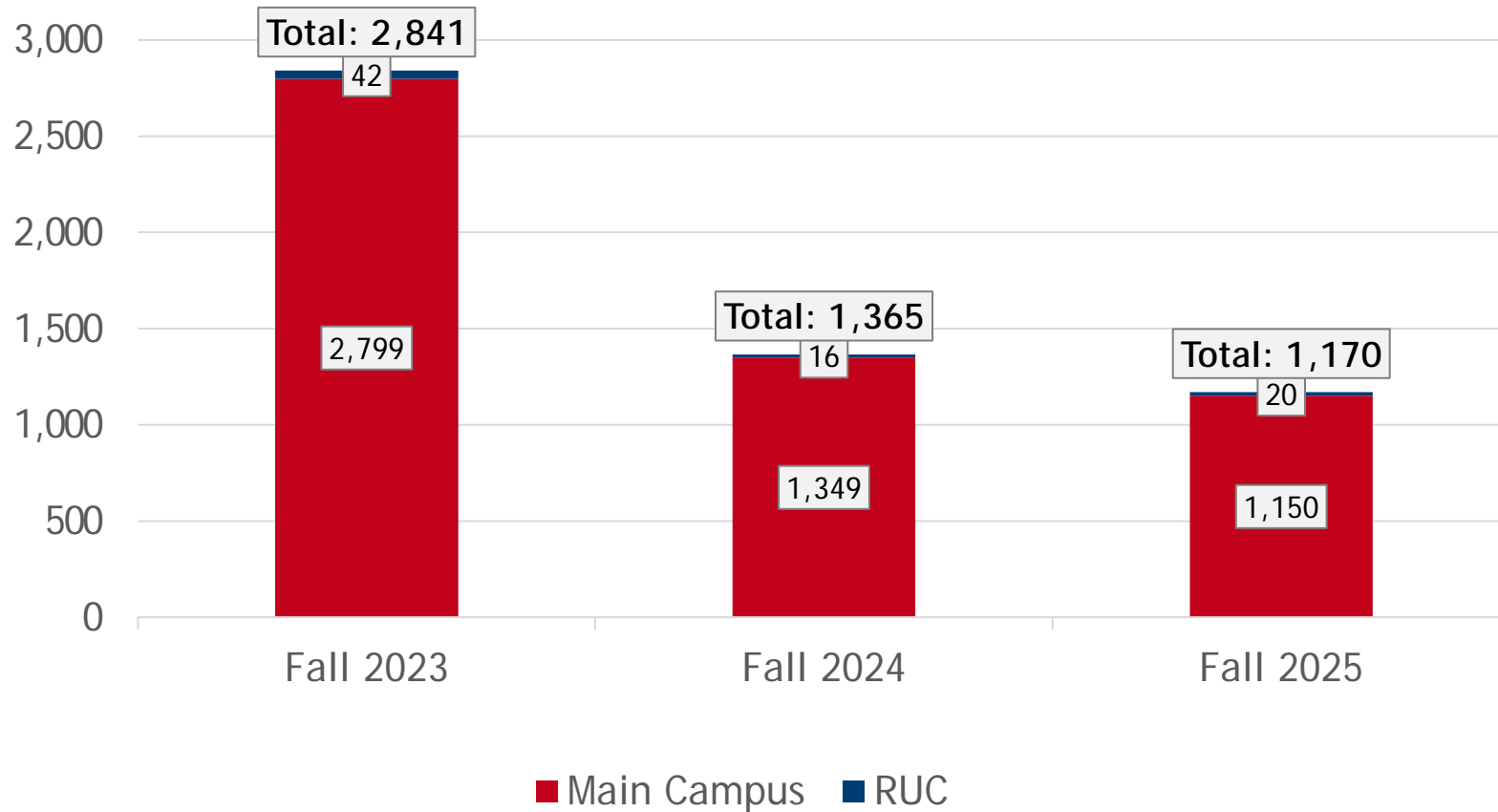


National Trend

1% down across the country

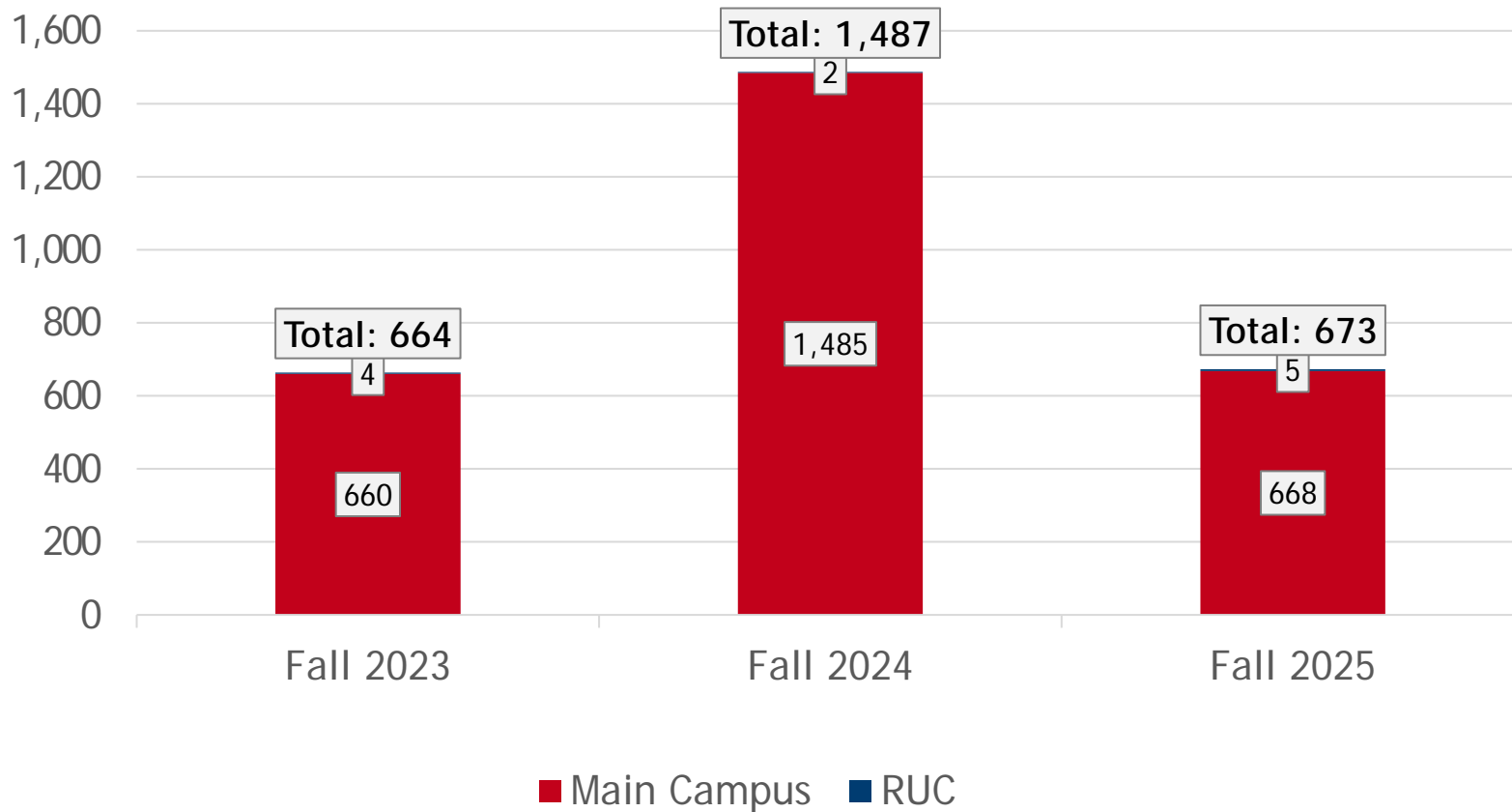
According to EAB

New Freshmen Applications – Out-of-State



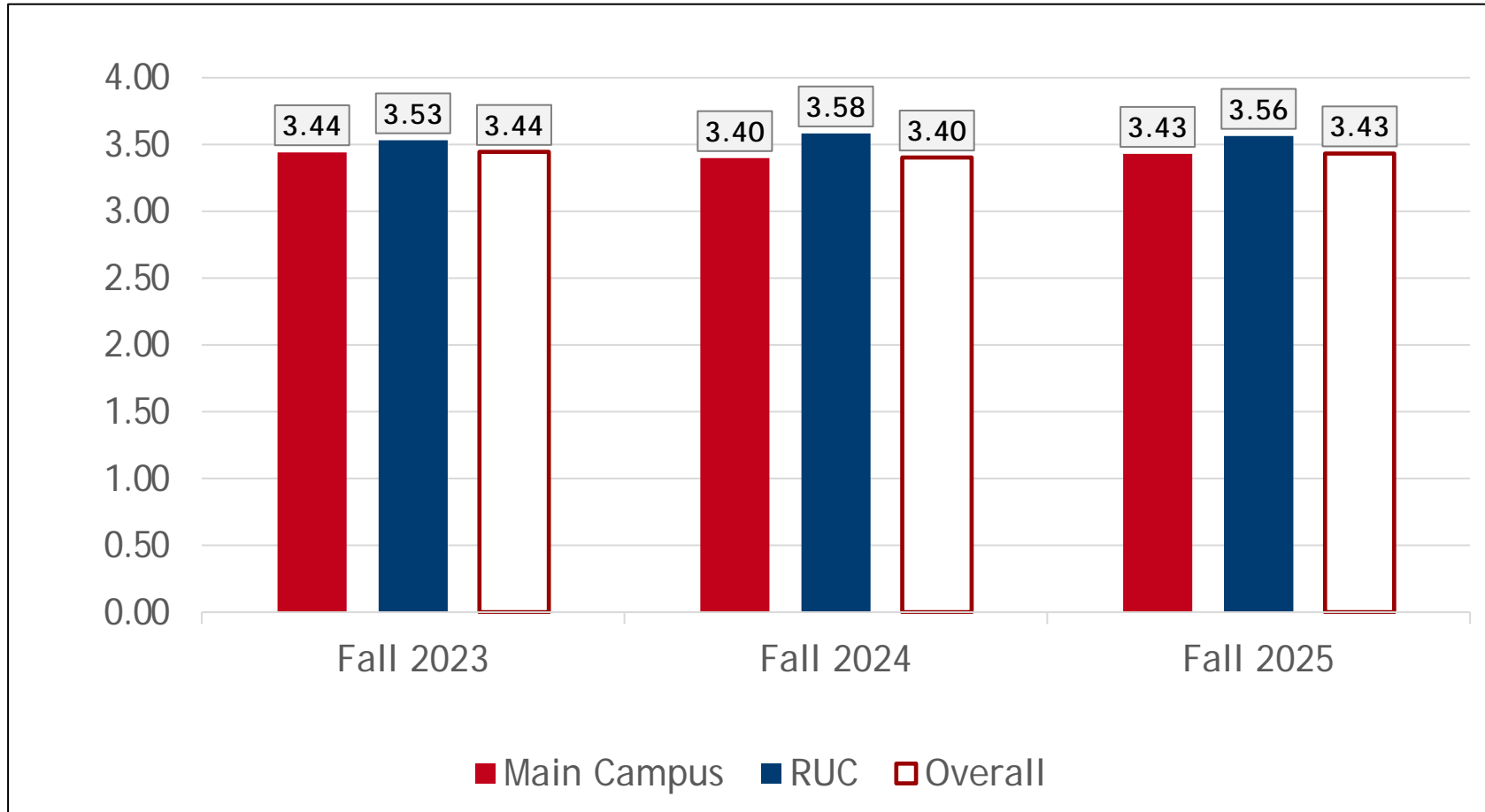
- Re-engagement of out of state markets closer to Virginia

New Freshmen Applications – International

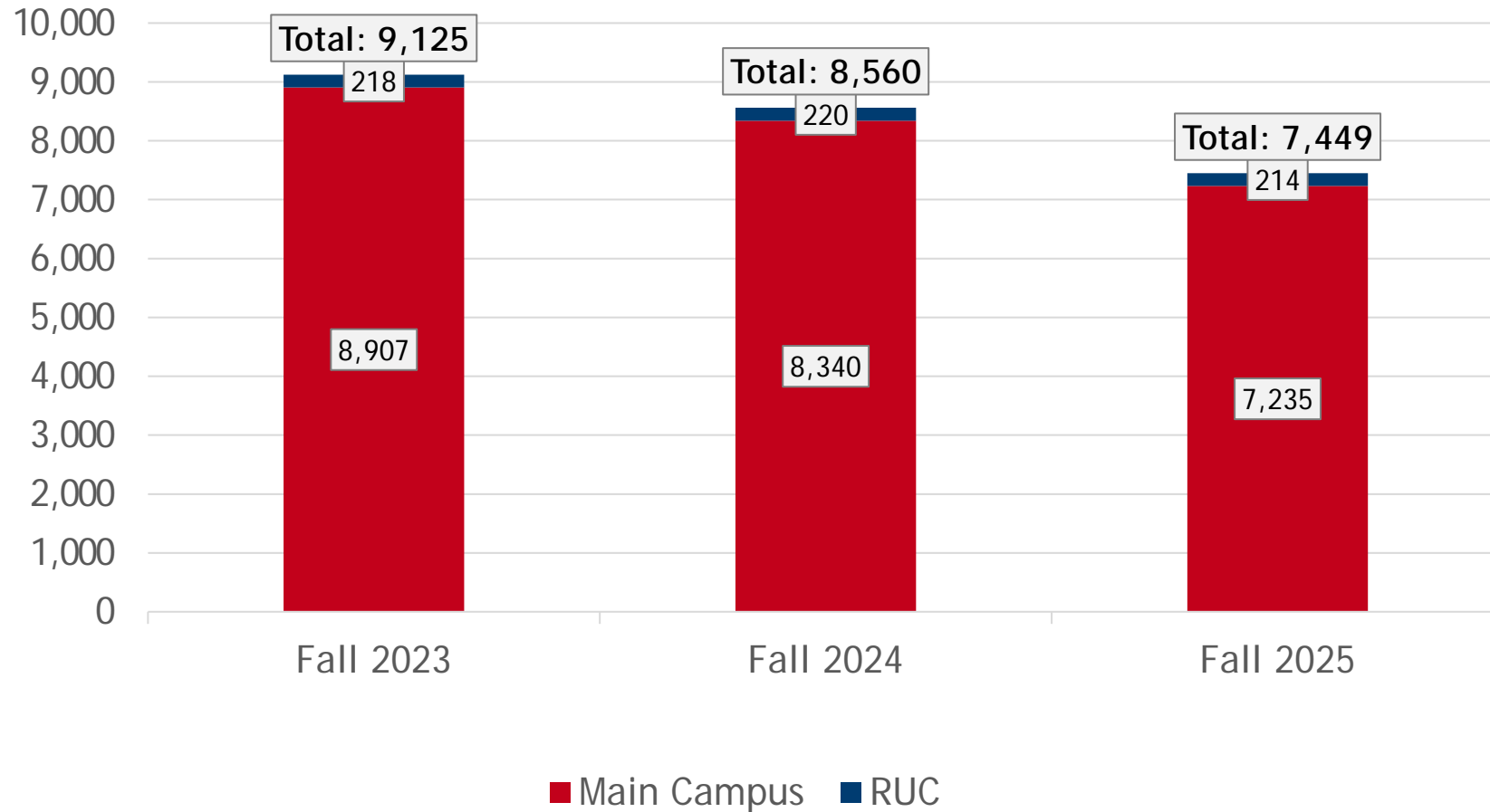


- Ideally only getting serious applicants and improve conversion

New Freshmen Applications – High School GPA



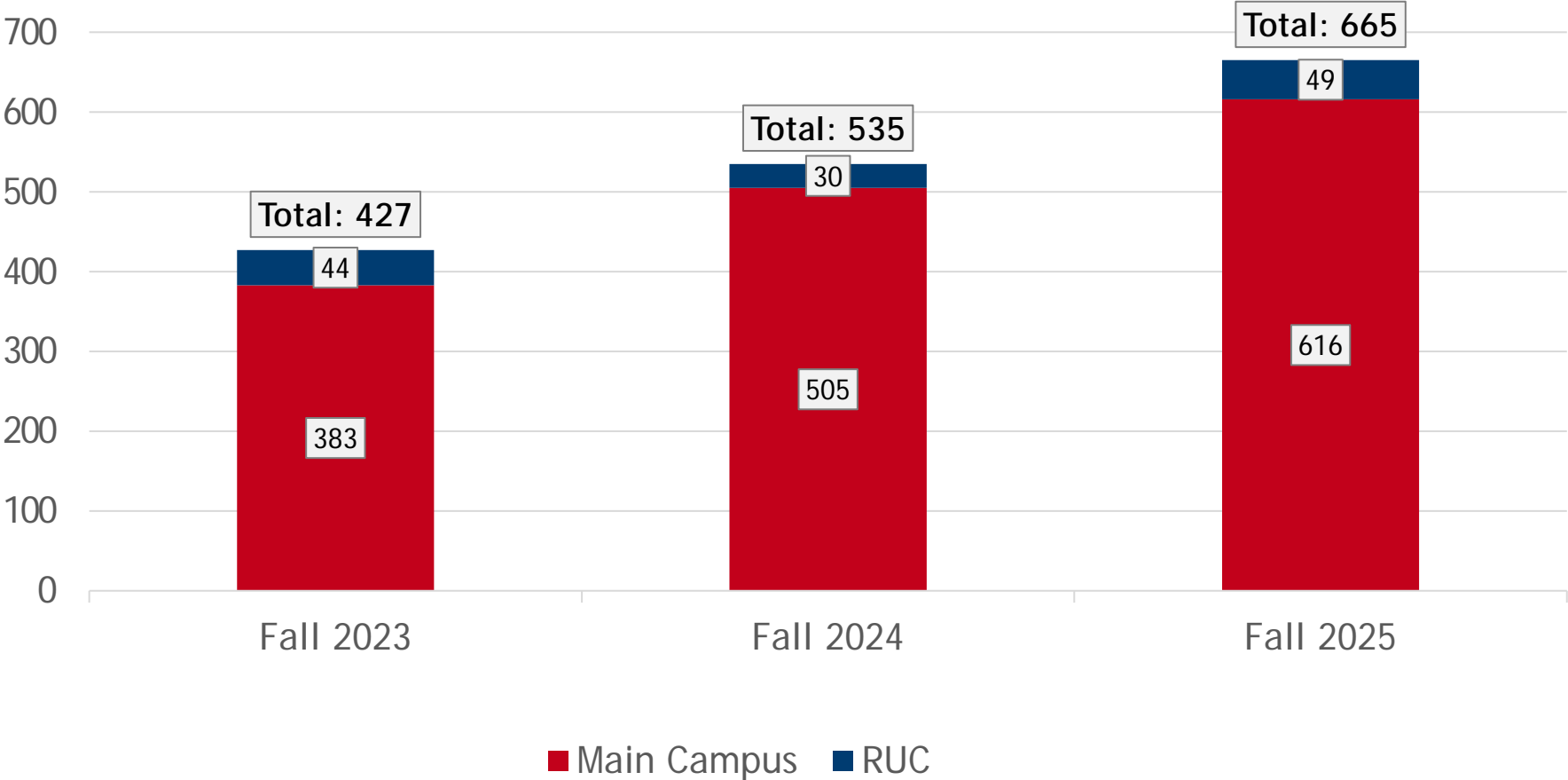
New Freshmen Admitted



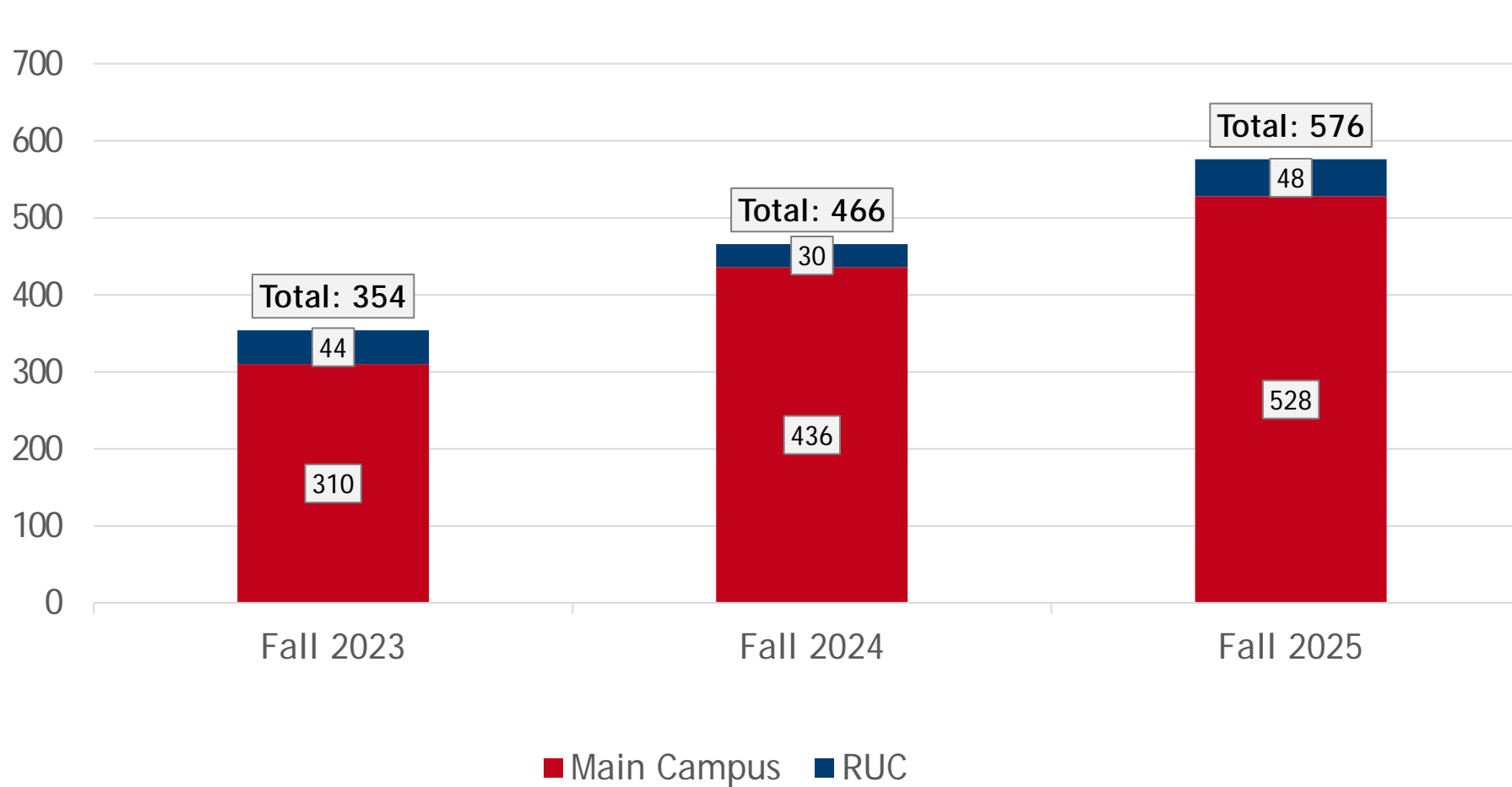
As of 3/4

New Freshmen Deposits

• 24% up

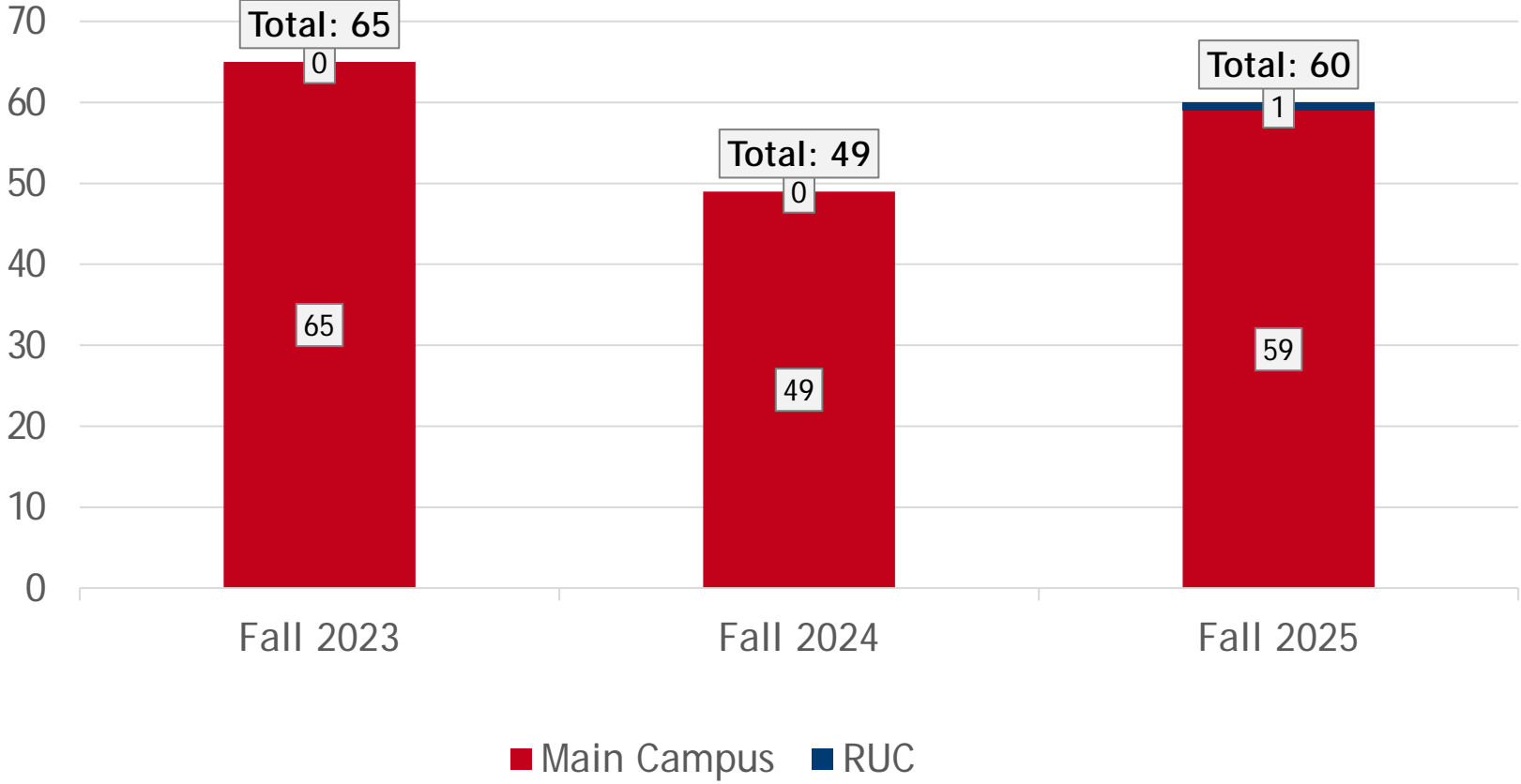


New Freshmen Deposits – In-State



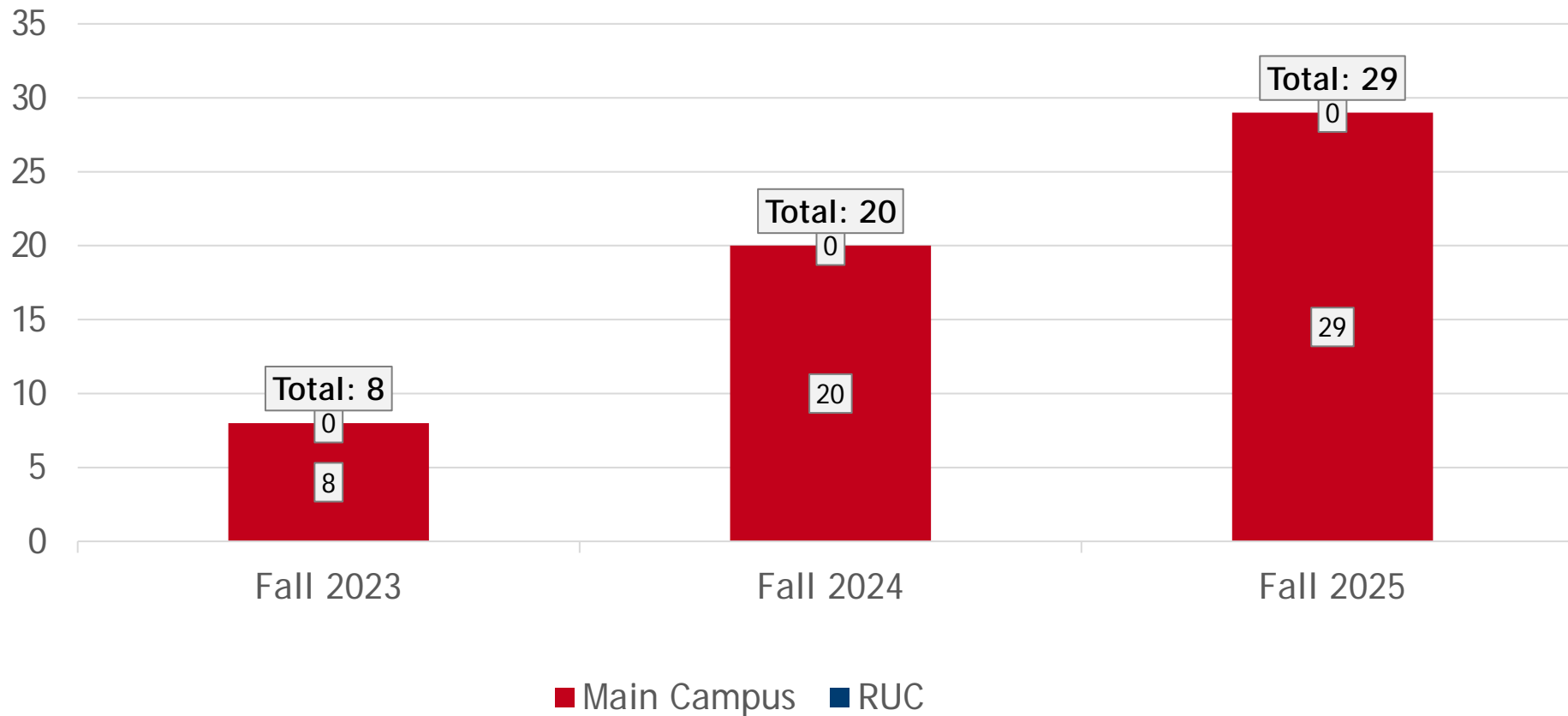
• 24% up

New Freshmen Deposits – Out-of-State



New Freshmen Deposits – International

• 45%



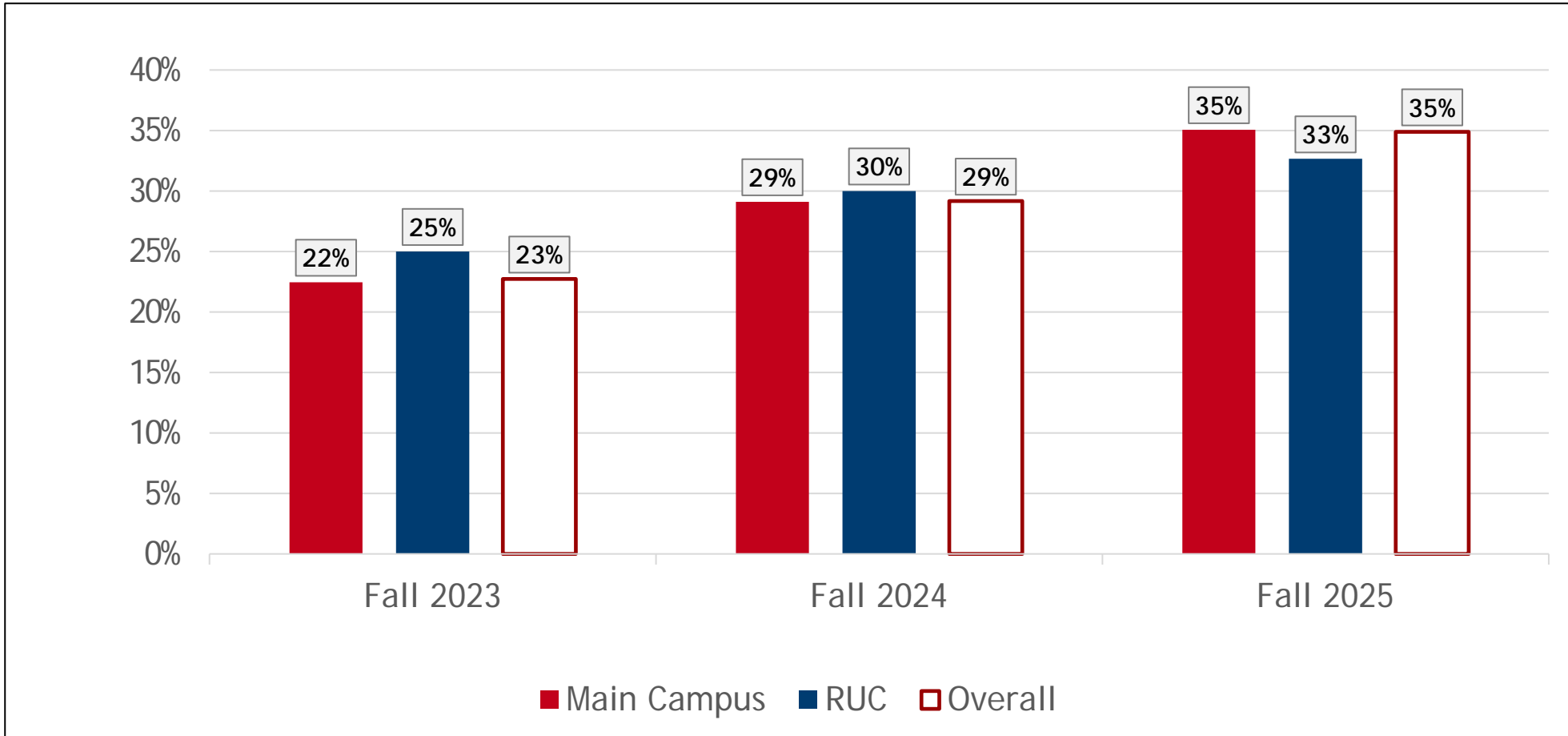
New Freshmen Deposits – Virginia Region

Virginia Region	Fall 2023	Fall 2024	Fall 2025
Central Va	43	57	78
Northern Va	59	72	76
Peninsula	5	19	22
Richmond	30	45	40
Roanoke Metro	58	73	98
South Central	6	11	18
Southwest	94	111	171
Tidewater	28	35	29
Valley	31	39	44
In-State, Unknown	0	4	0

New Freshmen Deposits – Top States

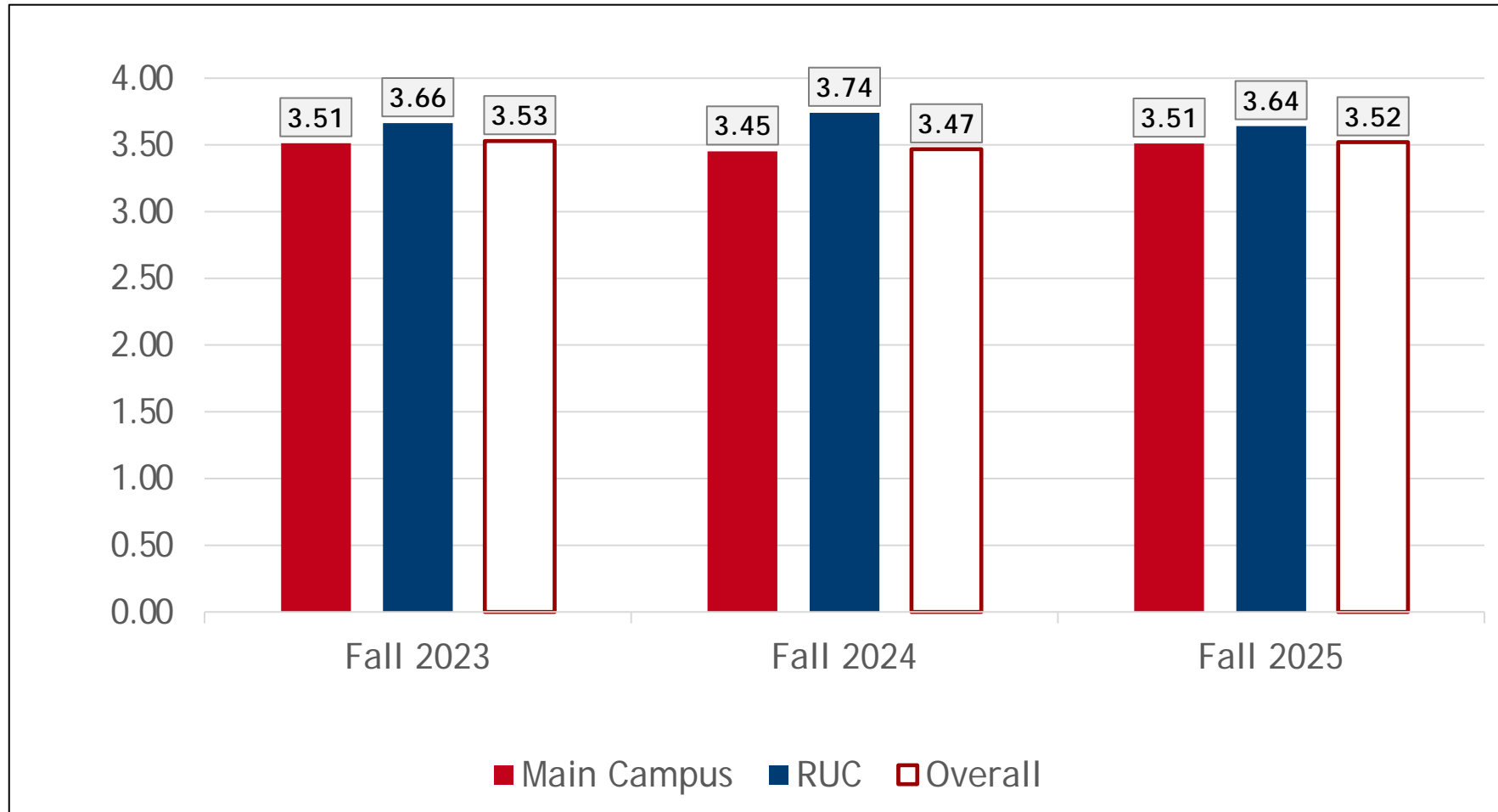
Top States	Fall 2023	Fall 2024	Fall 2025
Maryland	13	3	18
North Carolina	8	9	6
Florida	3	4	4
Ohio	2	0	4
West Virginia	9	4	4
Georgia	1	2	3
Illinois	0	1	2
Tennessee	3	0	2
Texas	3	4	2

New Freshmen Deposits – First Generation

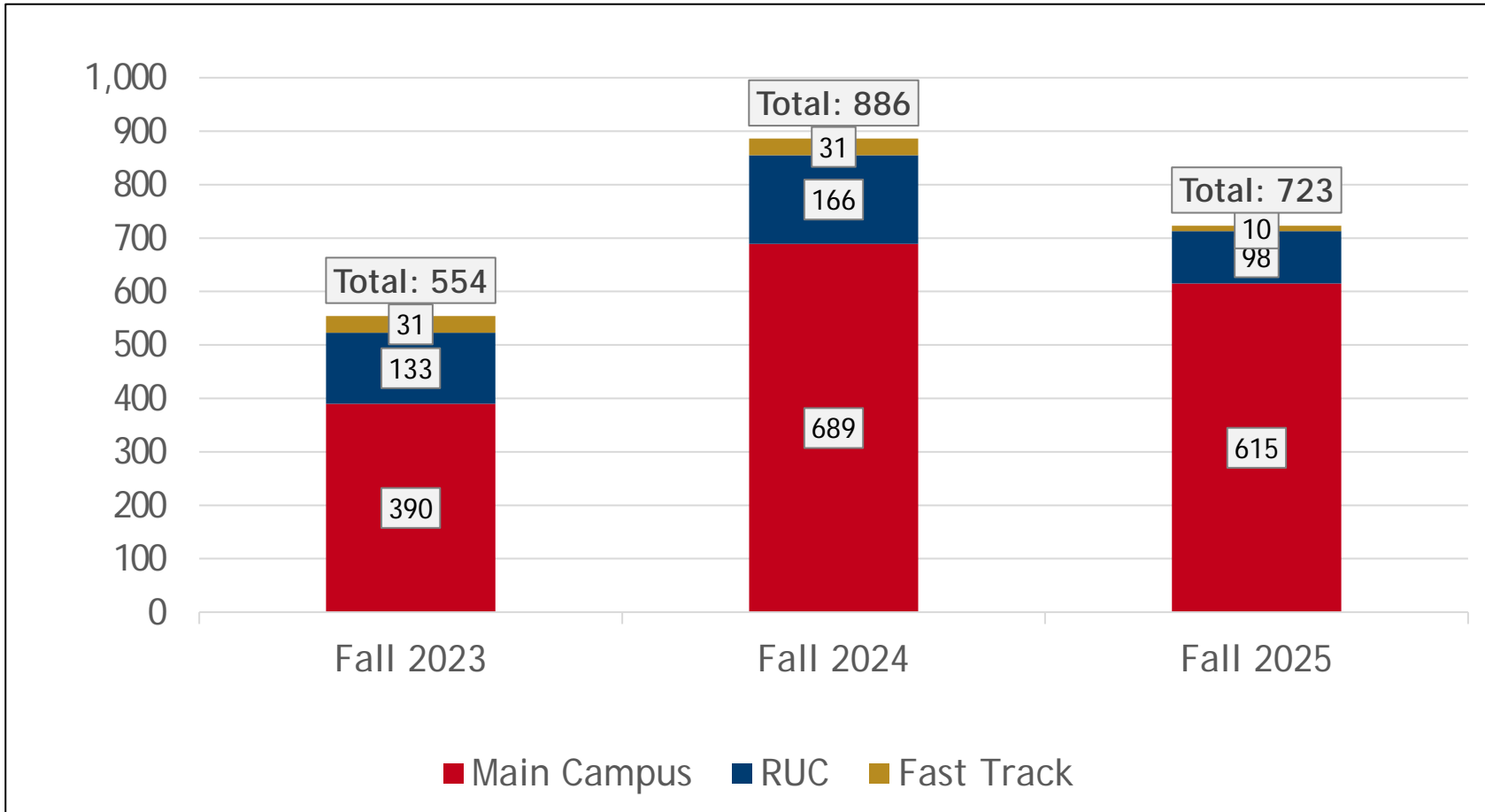


• 21% up

New Freshmen Deposits – High School GPA

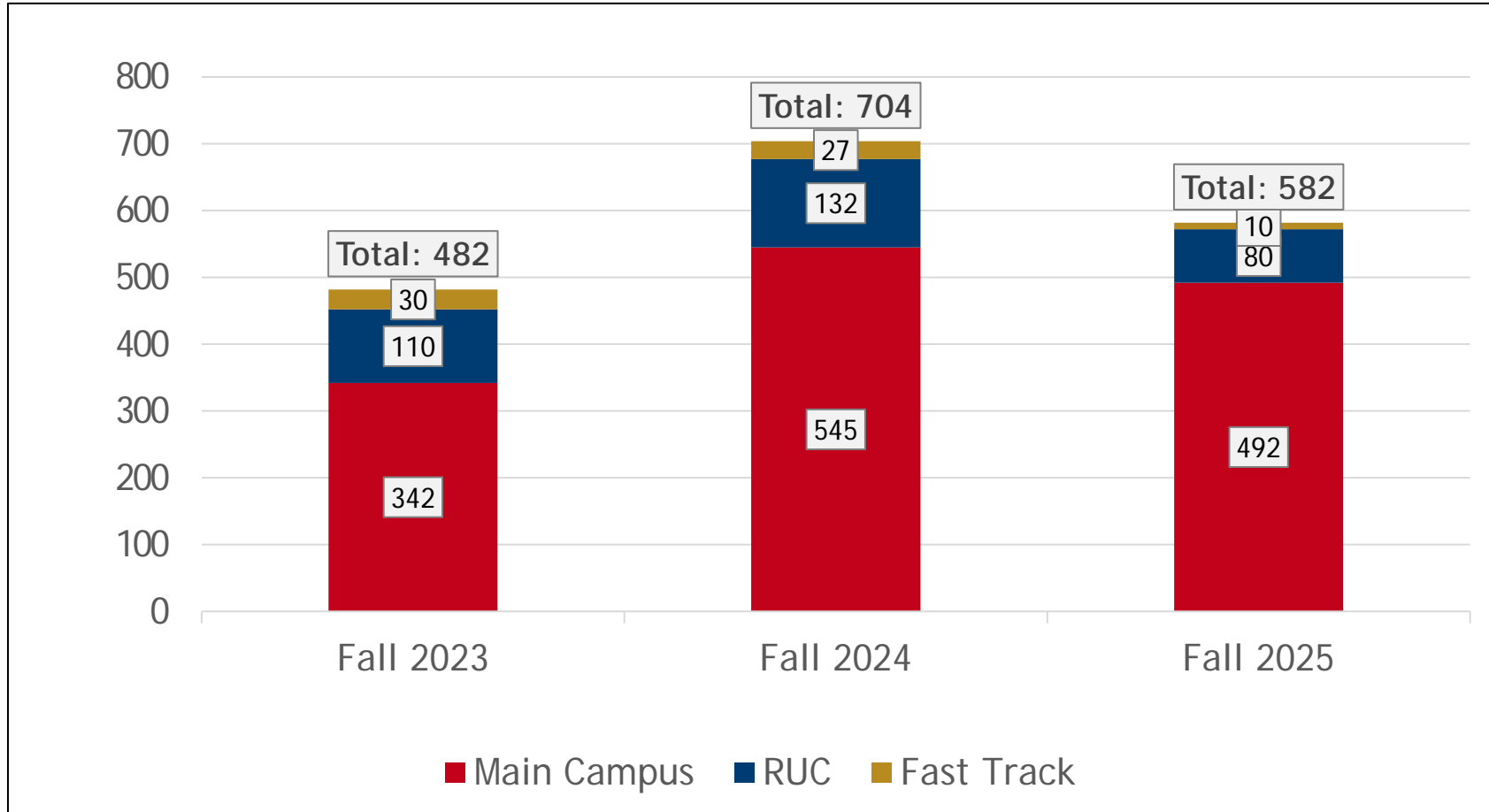


New Transfer Completed Applications

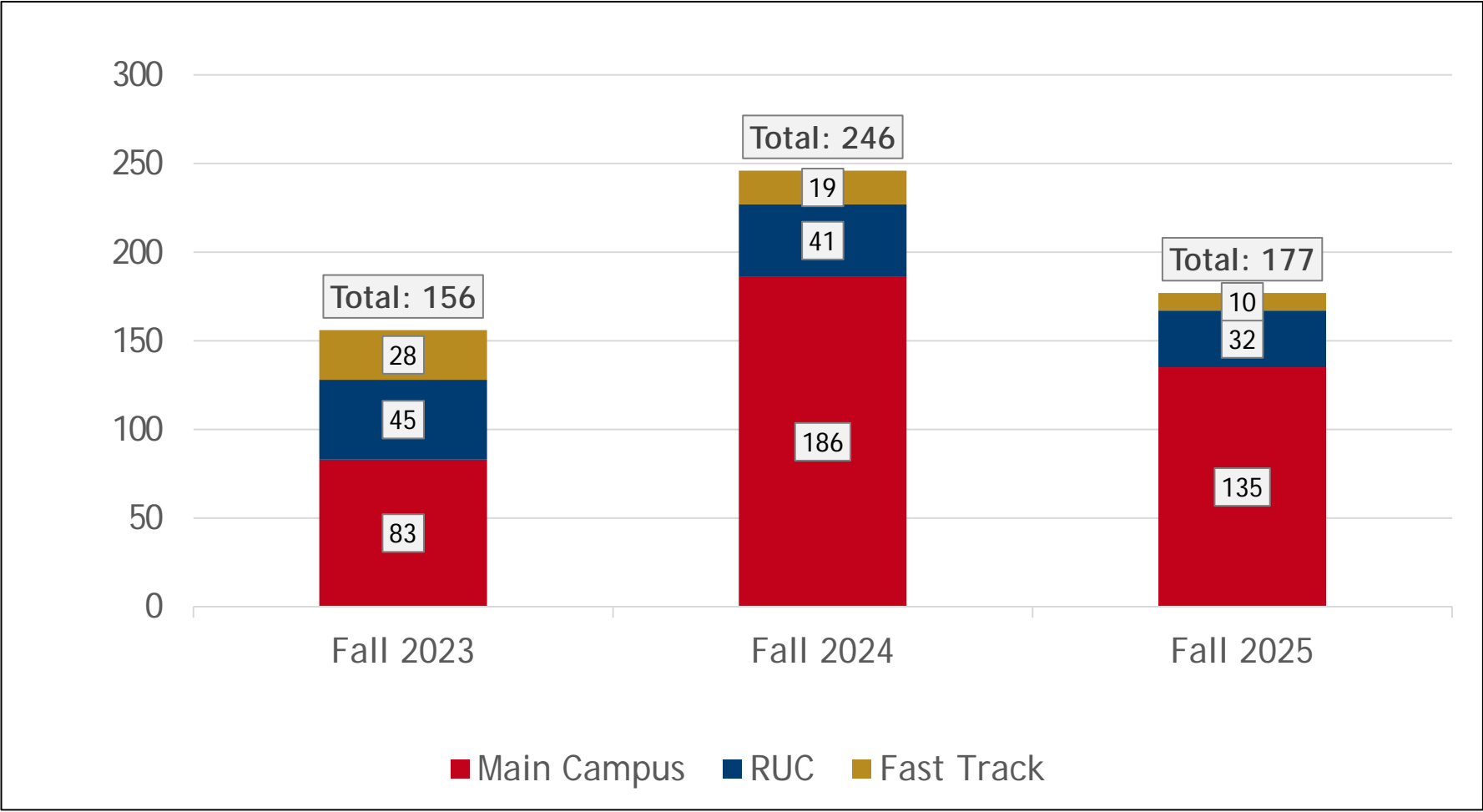


- 10 are international transfer students
- Not seeing the 4 year transfer applicants this year

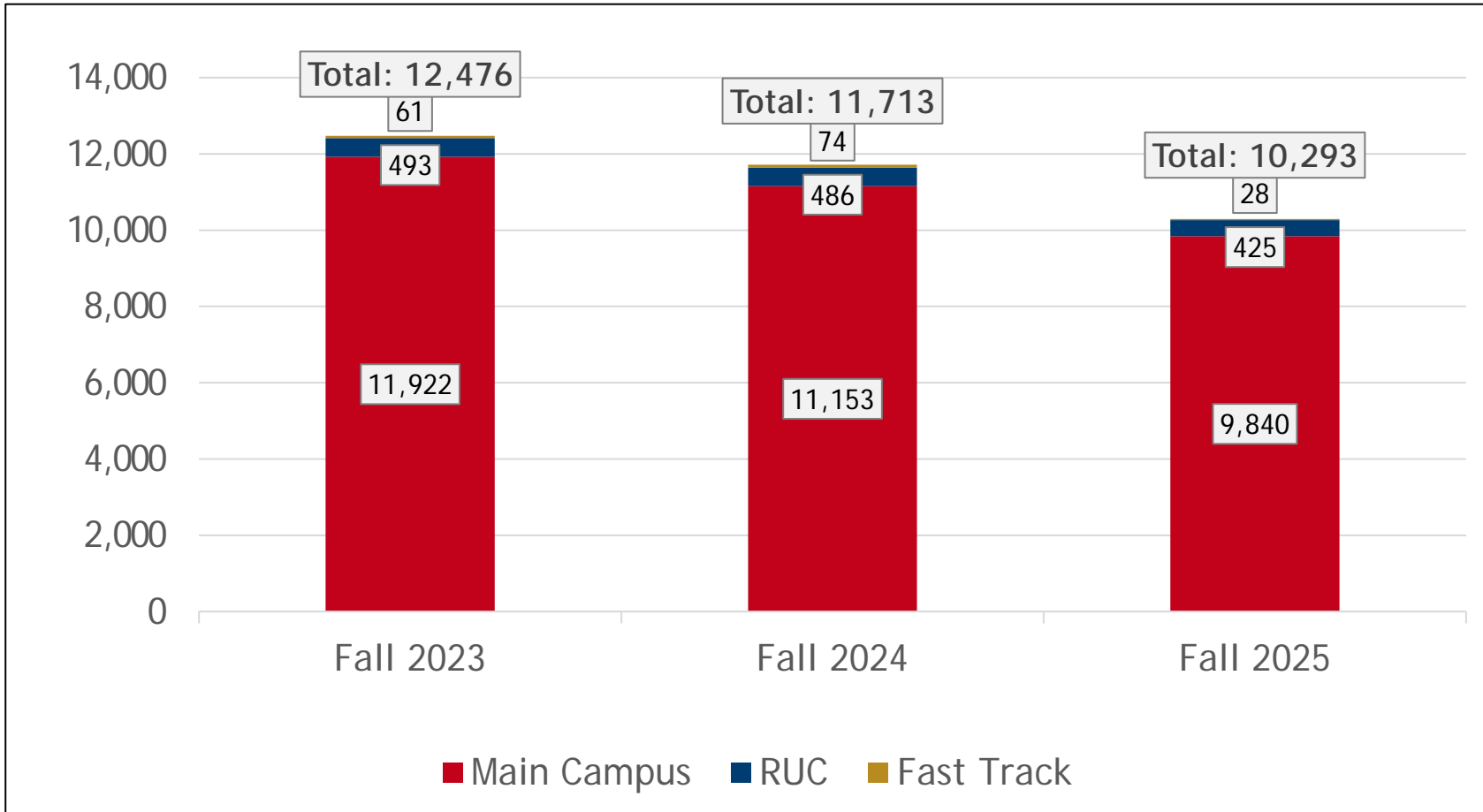
New Transfer Admitted



New Transfer Deposits

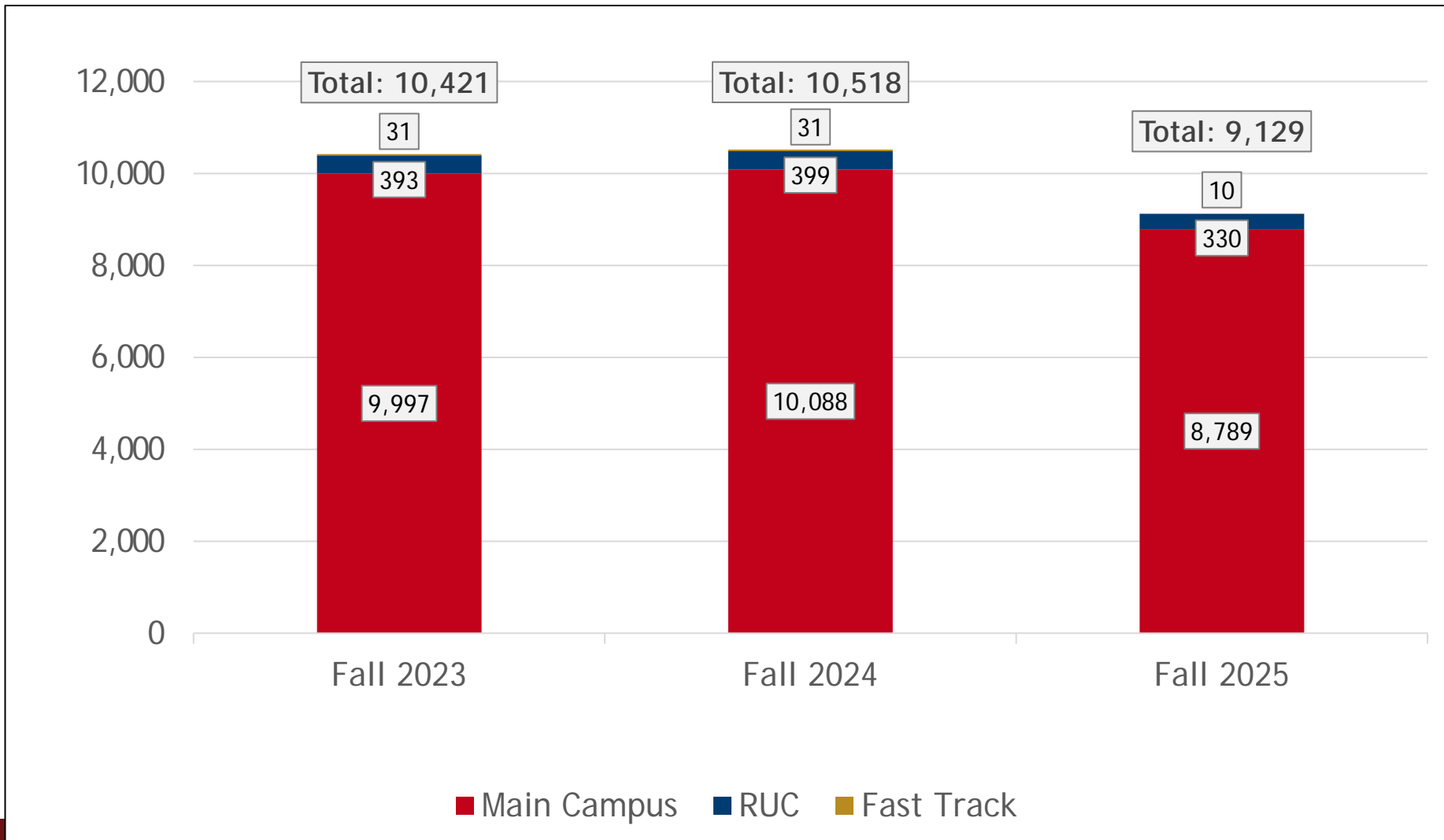


Combined NF/TR Total Applications



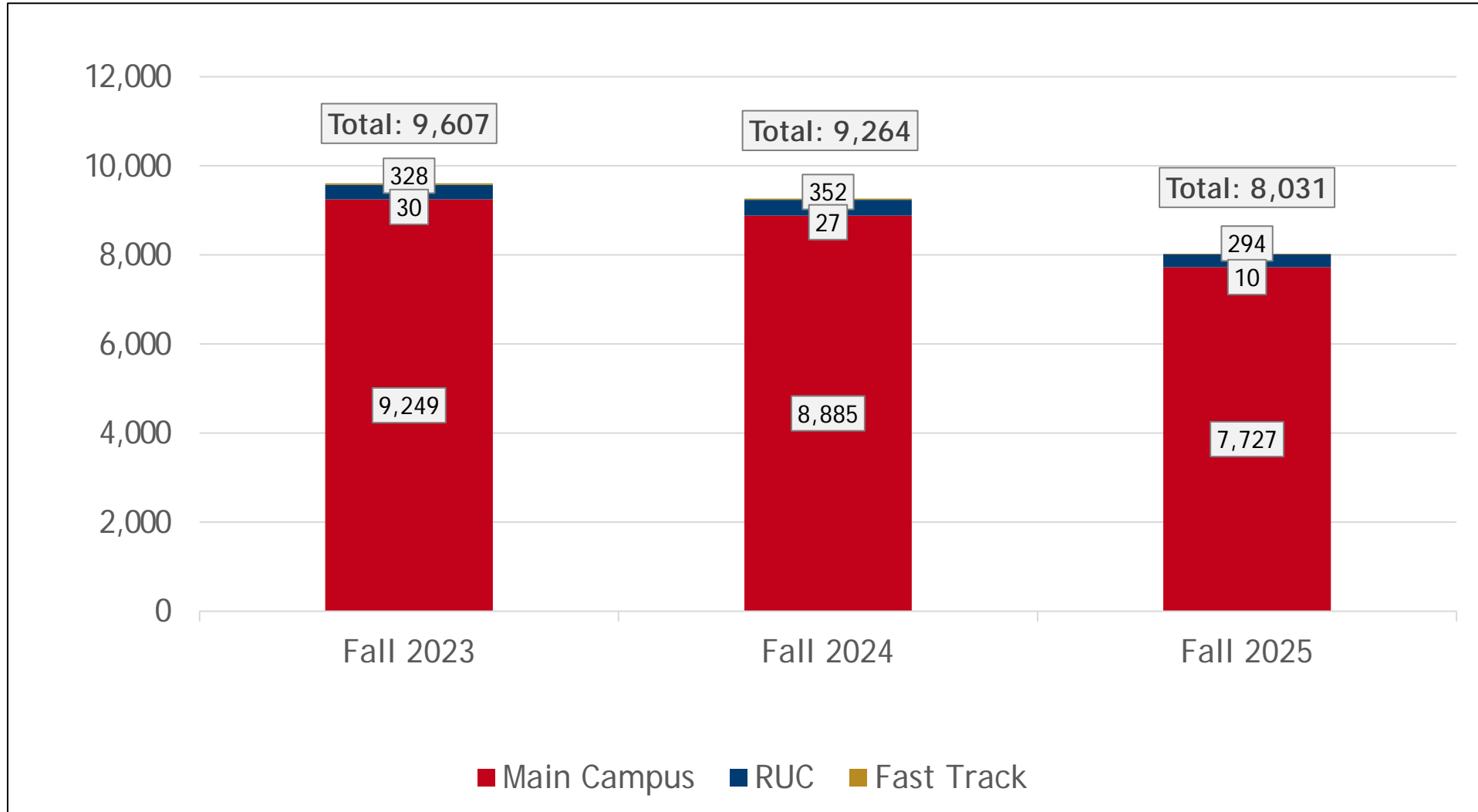
- On track for this year goals removing the international and outsourcing

Combined NF/TR Completed Applications

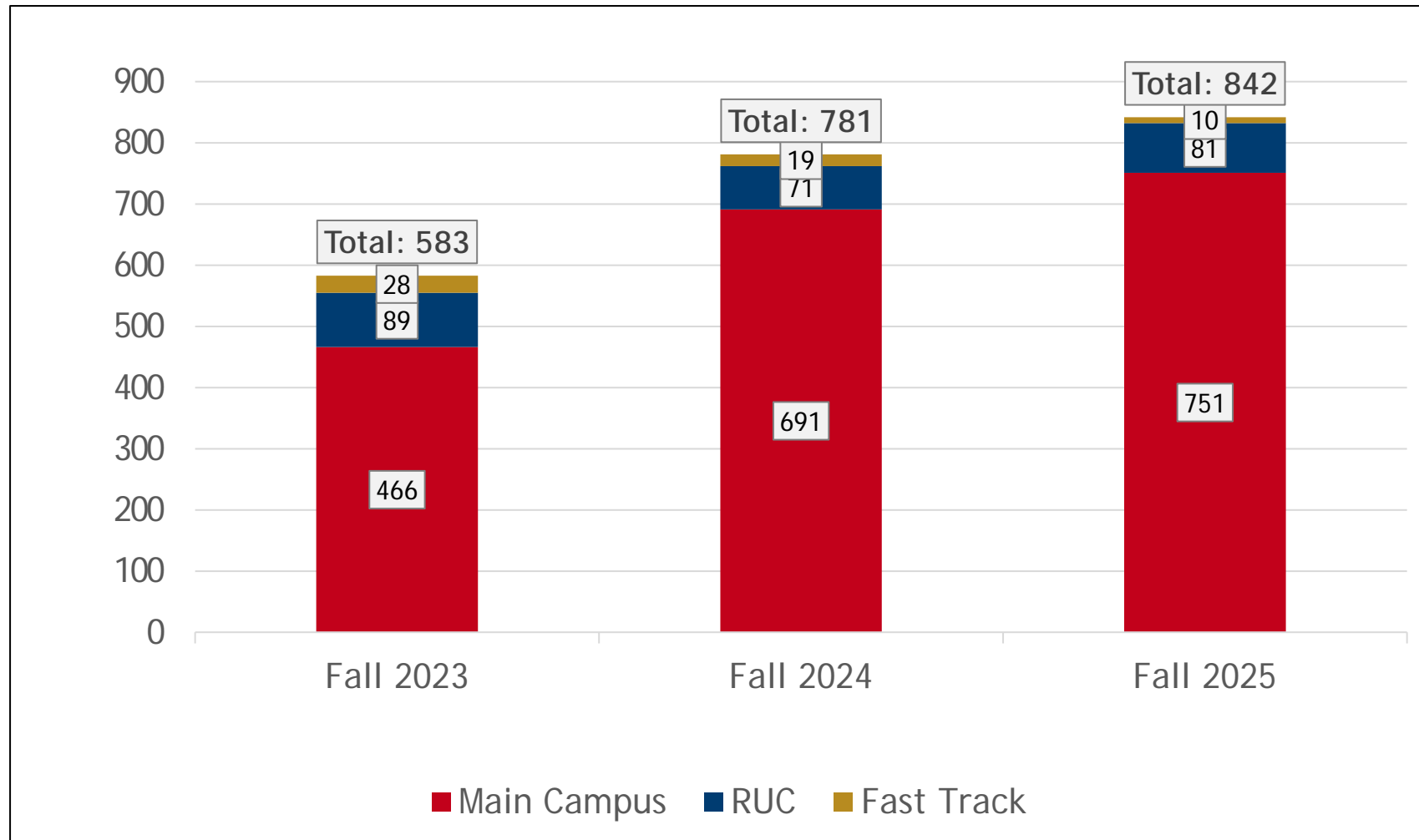


- Down 35% in Fast Track (fully online students)
- Down International
- Down Out of State
- Up In State

Combined NF/TR Admitted

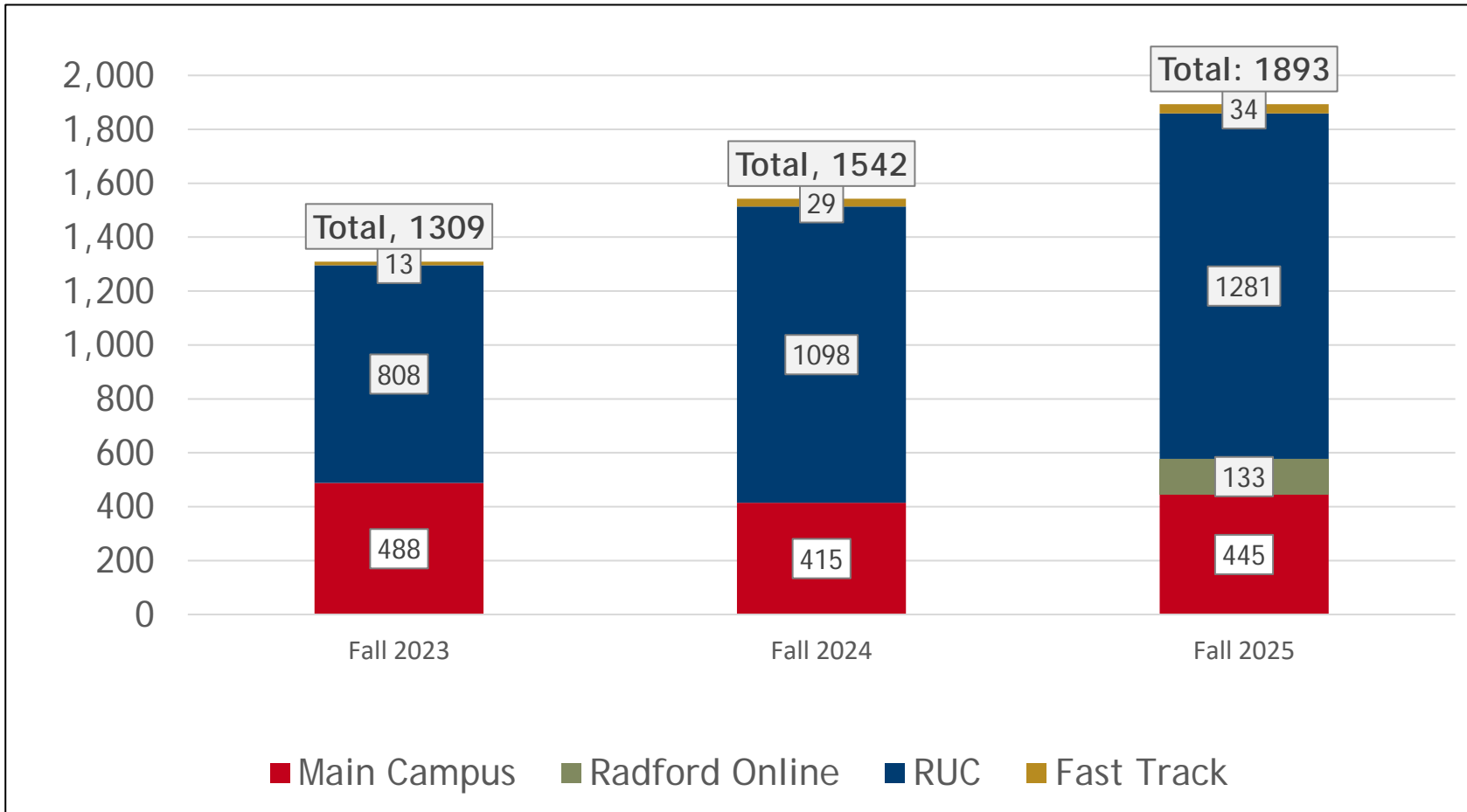


Combined NF/TR Deposits



- 8% up overall

Graduate Total Applications



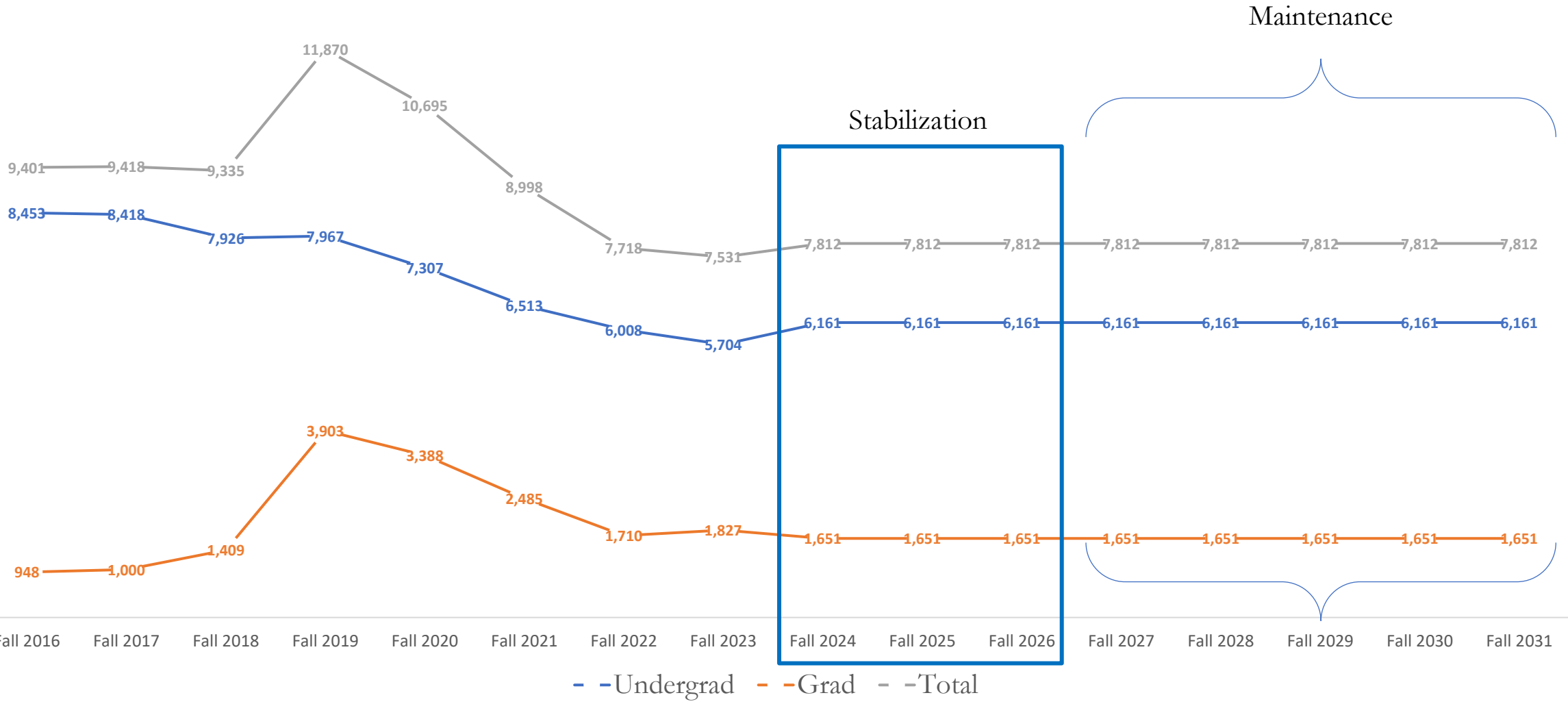
23% increase

Programs with application growth

- Criminal Justice
- Social Work
- Physicians Assistant

Future

PLANNED 6 YEAR ENROLLMENT AT RADFORD UNIVERSITY



What is strategic enrollment planning?

Strategic enrollment planning is more than a long-term recruitment or retention plan. It is a data-informed process that aligns an institution's fiscal, academic, co-curricular, and enrollment resources with its changing environment to accomplish the institution's mission and ensure the institution's long-term enrollment success and fiscal health.

-2023, Lew Sanborne, Ph.D., Ruffalo Noel Levitz

Planning Enrollment Consideration

- Instate (n=7018) and Out of State (n=794) and International (n=90)
- Main Campus (n=5225), Roanoke (n=803), Virtual (n=1759), Abingdon (n=5)
- Undergraduate (n=6161) and Graduate (n=1651)
 - Freshmen (71%) and Transfer (29%)
- Residential and Commuter and online
- Full time (80%) and Part time (20%), plus low credit (619 taking 5 credits or less)
- Degree seeking and Non-degree seeking (n= 309)

Enrollment Planning Assumptions

1. 6,296 total in person enrollment all campuses all levels
2. 76% retention year over year
3. Nursing enrollment to grow using Fall 2024 as baseline
4. Roanoke enrollment to be maintained using Fall 2024 as baseline
5. Create an online campus and maintain or grow enrollment
6. Maintain academic standards for admission all levels

February through August

1. **SWOT/Situational Analysis:** Identify
2. **Goals and Tactics:** Formulate
3. **Plan:** Write
4. **Assessment:** Review



Dr. Brent Gage
AACRAO Consulting

**Strategic Enrollment Plan
Report in December
alongside Strategic Plan**

Discussion

Minutes



Radford
UNIVERSITY



Enrollment Management and Brand Equity Committee
1:00 p.m.**
December 5, 2024
Mary Ann Jennings Hovis Memorial Board Room
Martin Hall, Radford, VA

DRAFT
Minutes

Committee Members Present

Mrs. Jennifer Wishon Gilbert, Chair
Ms. Betsy D. Beamer, Vice Chair
Ms. Callie M. Dalton
Mr. David A. Smith

Committee Members Absent

Mr. Jonathan D. Sweet

Board Members Present

Mr. Marquett Smith, Rector
Mr. Tyler W. Lester, Vice Rector
Mr. Dale S. Ardizzone
Ms. Jeanne S. Armentrout
Ms. Joann S. Craig
Mr. William C. Davis
Dr. Betty Jo Foster
Mr. George Mendiola, Jr.
Ms. Lisa W. Pompa
Mr. James C. Turk

Others Present

Dr. Bret Danilowicz, President
Dr. Dannette Gomez Beane, Vice President for Enrollment Management and Strategic Communications
Ms. Karen Castelee, Secretary to the Board of Visitors and Special Assistant to the President
Dr. Matthew Close, Faculty Representative
Ms. Lisa Ghidotti, Executive Director of Government Relations and Strategic Initiatives
Mr. Anthony Graham, Director of Enrollment Management and Data Analytics
Dr. Robert Hoover, Vice President for Finance and Administration
Dr. Angela Joyner, Vice President for Economic Development and Corporate Education
Dr. David Perryman, Associate Vice President for Strategic Communications
Ms. Allison Pratt, Associate V.P. for Enrollment Management/Director of Financial Aid
Ms. Susan Richardson, Legal Counsel
Ms. Sarah Tate, Interim Associate VP for Enrollment Management/Director of Admissions

Dr. Susan Trageser, Vice President for Student Affairs
Ms. Penny White, Vice President for University Advancement
Dr. Bethany Usher, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

Call to Order

Mrs. Jennifer Gilbert, Chair, formally called the Enrollment Management and Brand Equity Committee meeting to order at 1:01 p.m. in the Board Room of Martin Hall.

Approval of Agenda

Mrs. Jennifer Gilbert asked for a motion to approve the December 5, 2024 agenda for the Enrollment Management and Brand Equity Committee, as published. A motion was made by Ms. Betsy Beamer, seconded by Mr. David Smith and the motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Mrs. Jennifer Gilbert asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the September 5, 2024 meeting of the Enrollment Management and Brand Equity Committee meeting, as published. A motion was made by Ms. Betsy Beamer, seconded by Mr. David Smith, and the motion carried unanimously.

Brand Equity Report

Vice President for Enrollment Management and Strategic Communications Dannette Gomez Beane began with an update on the website redesign project which has fully transitioned to the new content management system. All content owners and editors have access to training and resources to equip them for building their sites to meet current demands. The goals for the website redesign project are to improve user experience, enhance audience engagement, present key messages and sustain website processes.

Associate Vice President for Strategic Communications David Perryman reviewed the website redesign project metrics which show we are ranking high but have room for improvement in search engine optimization.

Vice President Beane shared that the brand perception survey will be launched the week of January 27, 2025 with an email invitation and link. The survey will close on February 10, 2025.

Vice President Beane concluded with an update on the Communication Plan requested after the July Retreat. The proposed goals to be realized through 2026 are:

1. Advance the University's mission by supporting executive-level communications, events and activities.
2. Increase enrollment in Radford's academic programs.
3. Positively influence the University's reputation.
4. Enhance the University's brand equity.
5. Increase employee and student awareness and engagement.

Enrollment Management Report

Vice President Beane shared that for Enrollment Management, the preliminary census numbers in September were meeting and exceeding our goals. When the final census was gathered, we were at 7,812 total. Early indicators moving forward show continued growth. Spring deposits are up 26% for (domestic) freshmen and 50% for (domestic) transfers. Open house attendance has increased by 27% from 2023-2024. Early indicators show a strong fall 2025 incoming class of freshmen, transfer and graduate students.

Vice President Beane provided projections for the Radford Tuition Promise beyond 2025, sharing that the current FASFA completion rate for Radford University is over 80% while nationally it is 50%. The University confirmed 1820 students who were eligible for the Radford Tuition Promise and with the added funding we received, an additional 472 became eligible for a total of 2292 students.

Vice President Beane closed by stating that with upper class cohorts being small, even with increased new enrollment growth the overall enrollment will stay the same or even show a decrease in future years, the plan is to stabilize beyond 2026.

Adjournment

With no further business to come before the Committee, Mrs. Jennifer Gilbert adjourned the meeting at 1:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gina Stike
Executive Assistant to the
Vice President for Enrollment Management
and Strategic Communications

End of Board of Visitors Materials

